Rashtra Deepika Vol. 9 No. 6 June 2005

CHILDREN'S DIGEST

Story

YOUNG ARTISTS
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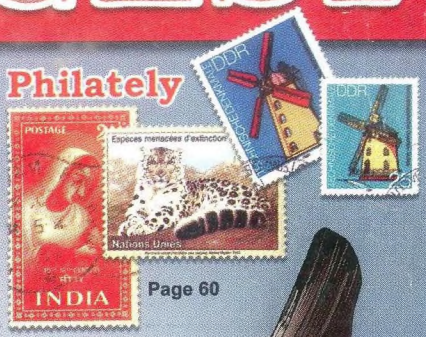

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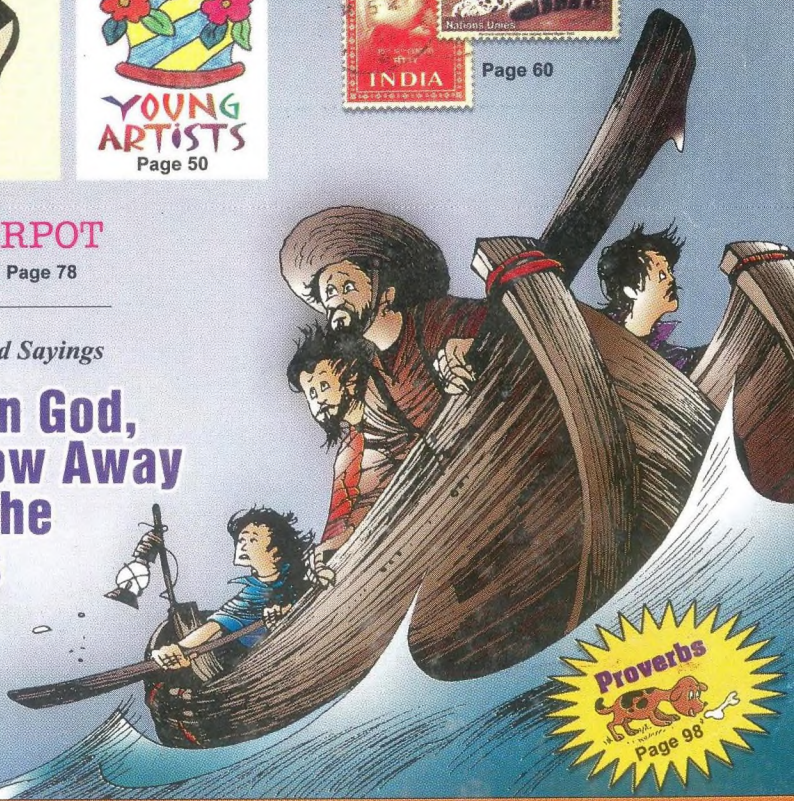

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Plus Towards Better English • A Leaf out of Literature • Fun Time • Quiz Time, etc.

Hippopotamus

Hippopotamuses are big, grey, pig-like creatures that live in Africa. They prefer rivers with deep water and nearby reed beds and grasslands, but are also found in saltwater areas near river mouths. They are hoofed vegetarians, feeding on grass, fallen fruit, and occasionally on cultivated crops such as sugar cane or corn during the night. They spend most of the day in the water.

The hippo is the third biggest land animal, slightly smaller but heavier than a white rhino (the elephant is the biggest). In spite of its huge size and a mouth measuring a half metre across - the hippopotamus can outrun a human. The bellowing of a bull hippo measures an ear-splitting 115 decibels, sounding like the roar of a lion. The hippo's yawn is not a sign of sleepiness or boredom but is actually a threat gesture, displaying long, thick, razor-sharp canine teeth, or tusks, with which it is capable of biting a small boat in half.

Nearly all of the famous African explorers and hunters - Livingstone, Stanley, Burton, Selous, Speke, DuChaillu - had boating mishaps with hippos. All considered the hippo to be a wantonly malicious beast. Spencer Tyron, a hunter, was killed while hunting near the shores of Lake Rukwa, Tanzania. A bull hippo turned over the dugout canoe from which Tyron was shooting, and bit off his head and shoulders.

The word hippopotamus comes from the Ancient Greek words for horse (hippo) and river (potamos).

RASHTRA DEEPIKA
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Father of the Atomic Bomb

Bonnie and Booboo

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If you light a lamp for somebody, it will also brighten your path.

-A Buddhist Saying

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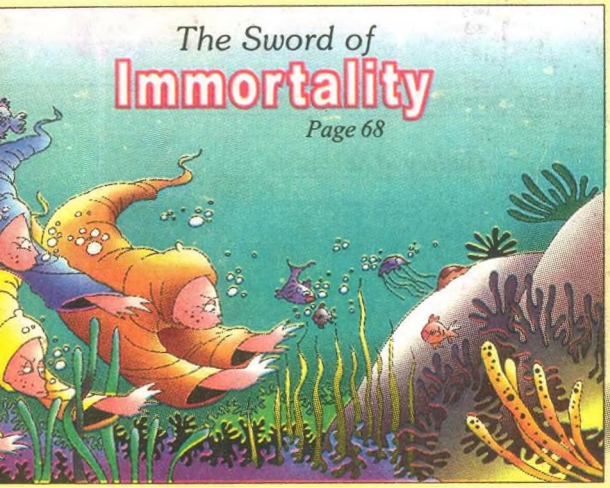
Novel



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ABROAD
Dubai: George Joseph Ph: 009714-518292

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Bharat Ratna Dr. B.R. Ambedkar

"Democracy is a form and method of government whereby revolutionary changes in the economic and social life of the people are brought about without bloodshed."

— Dr. B.R. Ambedkar

A Grateful Nation pays homage to
Bharat Ratna Baba Saheb Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar,
the champion of social equality and architect of the Indian Constitution
on his 114th Birth Anniversary.

Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, Government of India

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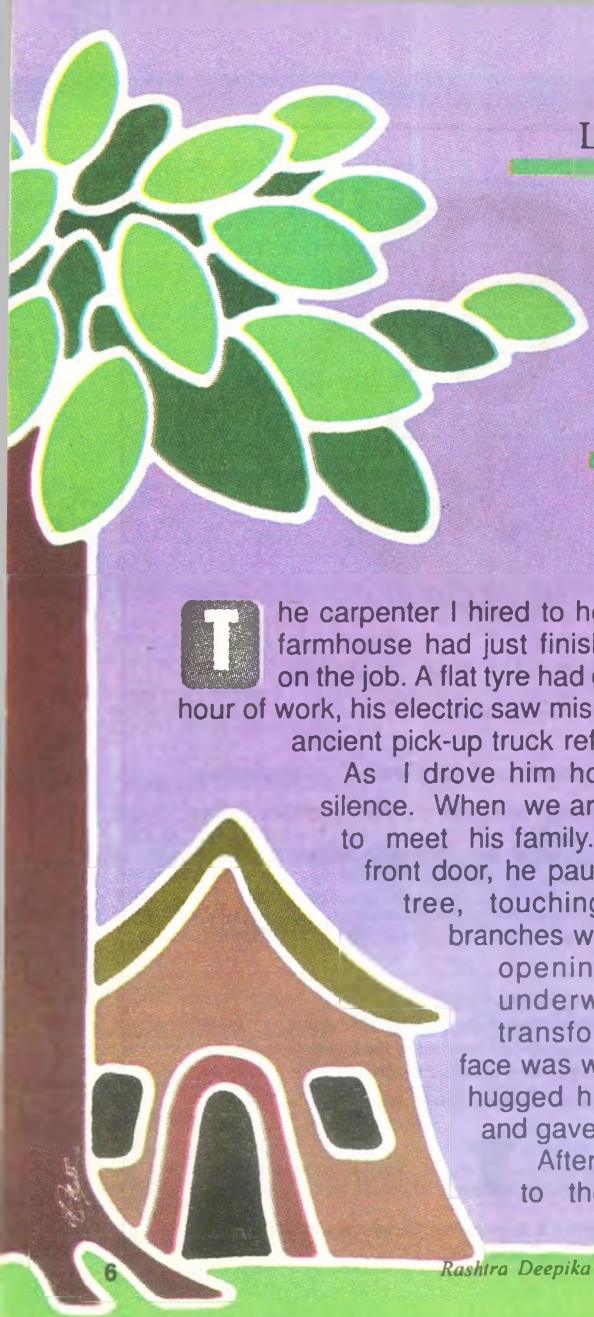
- Anonymous

THE TROUBLE TREE



The carpenter I hired to help me restore an old farmhouse had just finished a rough first day on the job. A flat tyre had caused him to miss an hour of work, his electric saw misbehaved, and now his ancient pick-up truck refused to start.

As I drove him home, he sat in stony silence. When we arrived he invited me in to meet his family. As we walked to the front door, he paused briefly at a small tree, touching the tips of the branches with both hands. When opening the door he underwent an amazing transformation. His tanned face was wreathed in smiles; he hugged his two small children and gave his wife a kiss.

Afterward he walked me to the car. We passed by

the tree and my curiosity got the better of me. I asked him about what I had seen him do earlier.

"Oh, that's my trouble tree," he explained. "I know I can't help having troubles on the job, but one thing's for sure, they don't belong in the house with my wife and children. So, I just hang them on the tree when I come home in the evening and then I pick them up again in the morning."

"Funny thing, though," he smiled, "when I come out in the morning to pick 'em up, there ain't nearly as many as I remembered hanging there the night before." ●

Did You Know?

The five Olympic rings are always red, black, blue, green and yellow because at least one of those colors appears on the flag of every nation on the planet.

After a particularly brilliant concert, Beethoven was surrounded by friends and admirers who were full of praise for him. One unusually enthusiastic woman exclaimed:

"Oh sir, if God had only given me that gift of genius!"

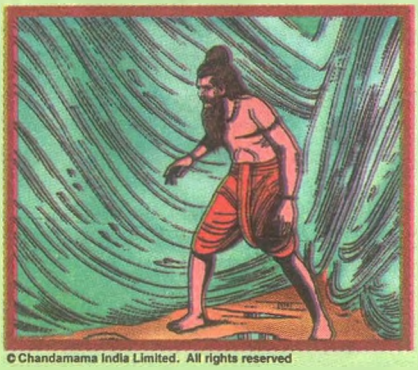
"It is not genius, madam," replied Beethoven, "nor magic. All you have to do is to practice on your piano eight hours a day for forty years and you'll be as good as I am.

STORY OF INDIA

THE KING WHO TURNED DEMON - II

The demon's anger did not end with Shaktri's death. Shaktri had a hundred brothers. The demon sought them out and killed them all.

Shaktri and his brothers were the sons of the great sage, Vasishtha. When Vasishtha heard about the tragedy that had befallen his sons, he was heart-broken and decided to end his life.



Vasishtha threw himself into the river. But the river immediately broke into a hundred shallow streams, so that Vasishtha could not find enough water to drown himself. Because the river split itself into a hundred streams, it came to be known as 'Satadru'.

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Going to another river, Vasishtha bound up his hands (so that he would be unable to swim) and jumped into the water. But another miracle happened. The deity of the river opened the knot on his hands and pushed him to the bank. Because the river untied his knot, it came to be known as 'Bipasha'.

Defeated, Vasishtha decided to return home. On his way he heard someone chanting Vedic hymns. Looking back, he saw Shaktri's wife – his daughter-in-law – following him. Shaktri's unborn child was reciting the hymns from its mother's womb. Vasishtha was happy that his family line had not ended with his sons' death.

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Soon, the demon came to devour Vasishtha. Although Vasishtha could have used his yogic powers to kill him, he compassionately sprinkled some holy water on him. The next moment, the demon turned into King Saudasa again. Realising that the power of a sage is infinitely greater than that of a king, Saudasa bowed to Vasishtha in gratitude.

- *Santhini Govindan, Mumbai*

The Largest Land Animal on Earth

The elephant, the largest living land animal on earth, has intrigued and interested man from time immemorial. The great animal's immense size, strength, and intelligence has meant that it has played a very important role in the economy, culture, and religion of the countries where it is found. The word 'elephant' has both Greek and Latin origins. In Greek, 'lephos' represents an antlered stag or beast. The Latin roots of the word can be traced to two separate words - 'ele' meaning arch, and 'phant' meaning huge.

Over the past 40 million years, more than 600 spe-

cies of elephants have roamed the earth. Today only two species are alive - the African elephant, and the Asian elephant. Climate fluctuations over the millennia, and resulting vegetation changes caused the extinction of many elephant species, but the growth and development of human civilization has also taken its toll on them. Today, the Asian and the African elephant not only inhabit different geographical regions, but also have distinct physical characteristics. Asian elephants are found in countries like India, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Myanmar, Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam, and Indonesia. These elephants are more easily tamed than their larger and wilder African counterparts. In fact, humans have used the docile Asian elephants for over 5000 years as beasts of burden, in warfare, and in ceremonial activities!

Did You Know?

An elephant cannot jump.

Asian elephants are smaller in size than their African counterparts, and they have two dome-shaped bulges on their forehead. They also have rounded backs, and less wrinkled skin than African elephants. They possess only one single finger-like projection at the top of the trunk tip, while an African elephant has two. The African elephant has large fan like ears that are at least three times as large as the ears of the Asian elephant. The African elephant uses its enormous ears to regulate body temperature, to signal warning to companions, and when confronted with danger, to ward off threats! It is interesting that each elephant's ear is unique and is used as a kind of fingerprint foe identification.

Both male and female African elephants have tusks,

Did You Know?

The male elephants have tusks and the females have 'tushes'

but the tusks of the male elephant are much heavier and stouter than those of the female. In fact, the tusks of a full-grown male African elephant may weigh up to 200 kilos! Among Asian elephants, only the males have tusks that protrude beyond their lips. Tusks are actually the teeth or upper incisors of an elephant, and are the largest and heaviest teeth of any living animal. The elephant uses it to dig, rip bark from trees, forage, and as a resting place for a heavy trunk! It can also be used by the elephant to hurl objects, and as a deadly weapon by an angry or threatened elephant.

Did You Know?

An elephant's tooth can weigh upto three kilograms.

It is amazing that elephants, like humans, are either right-tusked or left-tusked and favour the use of one tusk more than the other! Thus, an elephant's much used working tusks tends to get more worn out over the years. Sadly, it is the elephant's tusks that threaten its very survival, for they are made of ivory, which is greatly prized for making artifacts and jewellery. In the past, poachers have ruthlessly killed elephants to get their ivory tusks, and now trading in ivory is banned and is a punishable offence.

Did You Know?

Elephants have been known to learn up to 60 commands.

The most interesting feature of the elephant is undoubtedly its trunk, which is such a useful organ that it functions as both a nose and a hand! The trunk is an extremely flexible muscular organ, which is extremely sensitive to touch. Much of what an elephant experiences comes through this exploratory organ, for it is used for feeding, for drinking, for squirting water during baths, and even for

friendly wrestling matches with companions! At the first hint of a threat, an elephant will raise its trunk to get the scent of the danger. The trunk can be used to reach objects high above the head, even objects an elephant cannot see, and the trunk's stretching and flexing capacities give elephants easy access to plant species beyond the reach of many other animals that share their habitats. Elephants can stand on their hind legs and stretch their trunk to reach tender leaves growing twenty feet off the ground.

An elephant's trunk is, however, a lot more than just an implement for gathering food. When water is low, an elephant will dig holes to find underground springs, drawing as much as two gallons at a time with its trunk. These water holes also give elephants access to important mineral sources buried deep below the surface. An elephant also uses its trunk to sprinkle dust or grass on its body, to protect against insect bites and the fierce rays of the sun. A long trunk comes in handy when an elephant has to rub an itchy eye or scratch an ear too! The trunk can be put to use as a 'hand' and, in the most delicate of operations, can function with the dexterity of fingers. In India it is common for people to offer a coin to an elephant when they meet one, and the elephant is able to pick up even a small twenty five paise coin from

Did You Know?

Interestingly, the Asian elephant is more closely related to the extinct mammoth than to the African elephant.

a human hand with great ease. When they go swimming, elephants use their trunk as a snorkel!

When elephants meet, one may use its trunk to touch another's face, or they may entwine their trunks. This 'trunk shake' can be compared to a human handshake, and may be associated with similar functions such as assurance and greeting. It is also a way for elephants to test each other's strength. In the wild, elephants have been observed using their trunks to chase away other animals. While males often do so for no apparent reason other than wanting space for themselves, females wave their trunks fiercely when protecting their young. An elephant's trunk never stays still and can extend, twist and turn in any direction. It is such a versatile organ with so many uses that it takes two years for a baby elephant to become proficient in using its trunk!

Did You Know?

The African elephant has only four toes on the front feet and three on the back.

Despite their great weight, elephants walk almost noiselessly, with exceptional grace. Their thick, column like legs keep their bulk moving forward in smooth, rhythmic strides. A thick cushion of resilient tissue grows on the base of each foot, absorbing the shock of their weight. Elephants normally walk at a speed of about six kilometres per hour, but when roused to anger or afraid, they can accelerate, and charge at up to 40 kilometres per hour! Though elephants can-

not gallop or jump over ditches, they just love water, and readily take to rivers and lakes, where the water supports them and enables them to swim long distances without tiring.

Did You Know?

Ivory, the "white gold" of the animal world, has been valued by man since the Stone Age for producing works of art, religious objects, and a range of articles from billiard balls to piano keys. Today, Japan is the largest user of worked ivory.

An elephant's brain is larger than that of any land animal, and it is located at the back of its skull, well away from its forehead. Evidence gathered from scientific studies indicates that the elephant is a very intelligent animal. Elephants, like human beings, have strong individual personalities that affect how they interact with other elephants and behave. It is clear that some elephants are popular, while others are not. Some elephants show great leadership qualities, and these inevitably go on to become the leaders of their groups. Some elephants are kind and out going, but others may be self-centered! Elephants have incredible memories, and cry, play, and are sensitive to the moods and feelings of their companions. They grieve too, when one of their family members dies, sometimes even shedding tears from their eyes. Apart from trumpeting and grunting, elephants communicate with each other through special 'elephant talk' - very low sounds that are too soft for the human ear to distinguish.

Did You Know?

During World War II, the very first bomb dropped on Berlin by the Allies killed the only elephant in the Berlin Zoo.

Elephants display complex behaviour, living in tightly knit families that are matri-

Did You Know?

Elephants don't drink with their trunks, but use them as "tools" to drink with. This is accomplished by filling the trunk with water and then using it as a hose to pour it into the elephant's mouth.

archal - that is, headed by the oldest females, who are wise and experienced in the ways of the jungle! Families are composed of sisters, cousins, aunts, and nieces, and their young offspring, and range in size from two to twenty nine members. These animals may remain together for life. If a family becomes too large, a few females leave to start a new herd. The members of a family bathe, look for food, rest and travel together as a group. Male elephants leave the group when they reach maturity, and wander around alone, though they sometimes form small groups. These

Did You Know?

An elephant's trunk, a union of the nose and upper lip, is a highly sensitive organ with over 100,000 muscle units.

are not permanent though, and are not as tightly knit as the groups of females.

Elephants are herbivores, and they eat a varied diet of grasses, fruit, vegetables, bark, roots, leaves and stems, but their favourite foods are banana, bamboo and sugarcane. It takes a lot of food to sustain their enormous bodies, and an adult can eat up to 300 kilos of food in a single day! The natural life-span of an elephant, about 70 years, is comparable to a human's.

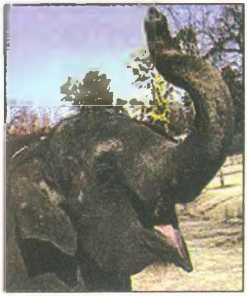
It is a fact that elephants were domesticated as far back as during the Indus Valley civilization 5000 years ago, as the image of the elephant appears on the

Did You Know?

Elephants are sensitive to fellow animals and if a baby complains, the entire family will rumble and go over to touch and caress it.

Did You Know?

Elephants cry, play, have incredible memories, and laugh!



Harappa seals. Elephants have always been used in war, because of their immense strength. Hannibal the famous leader from Carthage used elephants in 200 B.C. to cross the Alps when he was leading his troops into battle against the Romans. The Mughal emperor Akbar owned 3200 elephants, his son Jehangir owned 130000, and elephants were used in warfare as recently as in the 1960's in the Vietnam War!

Elephants are greatly respected in many eastern cultures. In Chinese, the phrase 'to ride an elephant' sounds the same as the word for happiness. During the days when present day Thailand was known as Siam, the sacred white elephant dominated the flag and culture. Buddhists, who believe that Buddha took the form of a magnificent white elephant during one of his earlier births, revere elephants. Hindus also venerate the elephant, and Ganesha the widely worshipped remover of obstacles, has the head of an elephant. According to Hinduism, the eight directions are guarded by eight elephants, and Lord Indra's vehicle is an elephant called Airavata. Elephants form an important part of Hindu religious festivals.

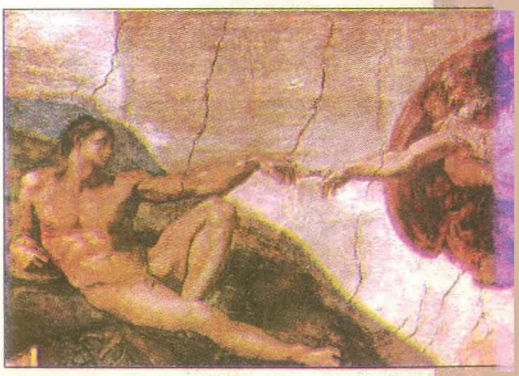
It is no wonder that elephants have always fascinated and intrigued mankind, for they are, as the famous poet John Donne wrote, 'nature's greatest masterpieces!'

Quiz of the Month

- Prof. N.G.J.

1. Which famous novel starts with: "Happy families are all alike; but every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way."
2. Ellery Queen is the pseudonym and also the name of a detective in the crime fiction of two U. S. writers. Can you name them?
3. Which unit of measurement is equivalent to one hundred square meters?
4. What is the meaning of the word 'conclave' derived from Latin, given to the meeting of the cardinals to elect a Pope?
5. Name the British rock group of 1962 formed by Mick Jagger, Keith Richards, Brian Jones, and two other friends.
6. Name the puppet-turned-boy who finds that his nose starts to grow when he tells lies.
7. Who designed the Petronas Towers in Kuala Lumpur?
8. What is the other name of the sport Ping-Pong?
9. What substance is used to make computer chips?
10. What is the other name given to the Iceman, the 5300-year old mummy found in the Alps?
11. Which Spanish queen is associated with Columbus's expedition to America?
12. Which U.S. city is famous for the Bellagio Fountain?
13. Identify the painting.

(See page 97)



The Bran Lord-2

MANDOOKAVARMA DREW HIS SWORD AND-
RASCAL..!!
CLANG
THE LORD ATE BRAN..
THE LORD ATE BRAN..
© JINGLE BELL CREATIONS
THE PARROT FLEW THROUGH EVERY NOOK AND CORNER OF THE KINGDOM SINGING-
THE LORD ATE BRAN..
THE LORD ATE BRAN..
MAY BE THE KING'S PARROT.

ON KNOWING THIS THE LORD ROLLED AND CRIED.
OH NO! I LOST MY RESPECT. BOO.. HOO... BOO..HOO...
HOW CAN I LIVE NOW?
AT ANGURAN'S HOUSE..
WE'RE DONE FOR! SOMEBODY CAUGHT OUR PARROT AND GAVE IT TO THE KING.
WHAT?

THAT PARROT HAS RUINED US..
OH NO! THE KING WILL BEHEAD YOU.
BOO...HOO.. WHO IS THERE FOR ME NOW..
MEANWHILE THE RAJGURU RUSHED TO THE KING'S CHAMBER HEARING THE COMMOTION.
LORD, WHAT HAPPENED?
BOO.. HOO.. BOO.. HOO.. HOO...
WHAT'S THE MATTER?
OH! HOW CAN I SAY THAT?

THE KING EXPLAINED EVERYTHING.
IS THAT ALL?
I'LL HELP YOU OUT.

NOW, LISTEN.
EATING BRAN IS NOT A SIN.
IT'S FOOLISH TO SAY THAT YOU'LL LOOSE RESPECT BY EATING BRAN.
BRAN HAS MEDICINAL VALUE.
PROCLAIM TOMORROW ITSELF THAT YOU ATE BRAN TO CURE YOUR ILLNESS.

AND GIVE A FITTING PUNISHMENT TO ANGURAN FOR MAKING A FOOL OF YOU.
GUARDS! IMPRISON ANGURAN AND HIS WIFE.
NEXT DAY.
DUM!..
DUM
THE KING ORDERS ALL THE SUBJECTS TO EAT BRAN TO BECOME HEALTHY.
©JINGLE BELL CREATIONS
POOR ANGURAN AND HIS WIFE WERE PUT IN PRISON.
HUH! ALL DUE TO YOU.
BOO.. HOO..
CROOKED IDEAS MAY BRING TEMPORARY GAINS. BUT IT'S FINAL RESULT IS ALWAYS DISASTROUS.

-P.G.

Use of Mobile Phones Harmful for Children

Scientists think that the use of mobile phones by children might be harmful for them. The electromagnetic radiation emitted from the phones may damage DNA and cause benign brain tumors. In Britain, the chairman of the National Radiation Protection Board has advised parents against giving mobile phones to children below the age of eight. Henri Lai, bioengineering professor at the University of Washington says that the young skulls of children are thinner and their growing brain may be more susceptible to radiation.

The Snows of Kilimanjaro

The "Snows of Kilimanjaro" is the caption of a famous story by Ernest Hemingway. Kilimanjaro is a mountain, with perennial snow covering its crest. What makes it special is that this snow-capped mountain stands in

the heart of tropical Africa where snow is unknown. It appears that now the snow is melting away, revealing the bald rock underneath. The melting is caused by the rise in atmospheric temperature on account of global warming. At this rate, it is said that within a decade perhaps, the snows of Kilimanjaro will become a mere legend surviving through the pen of a master writer.

Saliva Test to Predict Disease

According to Paul Denny of the University of Southern California's School of Dentistry, a simple saliva test could predict whether a child would develop dental cavities, how many he might develop and even which teeth might develop cavities. A tiny smear of saliva contains much the same information as a sample of urine and blood. Some scientists say that within two years saliva tests can warn of not only dental cavities but of oral cancer, respiratory diseases and anthrax infection as well.

Life On Mars

European Space Agency scientists think that at one time life existed on Mars and that it still does. The E.S.A. mission to the planet found a large ice sea near its equator, and believes that volcanic activity is still continuing at its poles. The scientists were asked about the kind of life they think existed on Mars

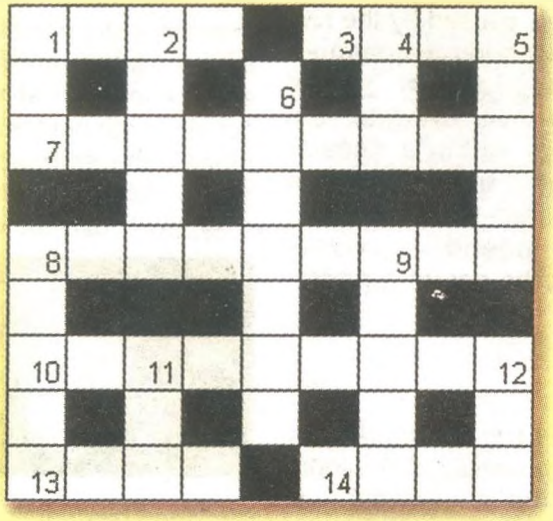
and they replied, "bacterial".

Mars is a very hostile planet, they said, with a solar wind blowing away planetary materials, and night temperatures at the poles dropping down to -143 degree Celsius. The evidence for the existence of life on the planet is the methane they found there. "The only source that can generate so much methane is forms of life," they said.

●

Crossword

- K. S. Geethavani, Coimbatore



Across:

1. Part of plant beneath soil (4)
3. Nought, nil (4)
7. Small size (9)
8. Country found in 'I AND NOISE' (9)
10. Colourful flying insect (9)
13. Christmas (4)
14. Broad smile (4)

Down:

1. Male sheep (3)
2. Possessed (5)
4. A Flightless bird (3)
5. Musical drama (5)
6. Fell unconscious (7)
8. Email is sent to this folder (5)
9. Less dangerous (5)
11. Hot beverage (3)
12. Japanese currency (3)

(See page 97)

Tales of St. Austin's

The scene – St. Austin's, a residential boys' public school in England over a century ago. Like schoolboys everywhere, the boys of St. Austin's take their cricket very seriously, enjoy playing classroom pranks, notwithstanding the piles of 'lines', or impositions inflicted by the long-suffering teachers, and struggle manfully through the mountains of classics forming their curriculum.

Frederick Bradshaw is one of the Austinites who, even at that tender age, has the makings of a master criminal! The exams are near, and the Greek question paper is set by the form-master Mellish, who becomes a sadist around this time. As the author puts it, "He brooded silently apart from the madding crowd...at intervals he would smile evilly, and jot down a note on the back of an envelope. These notes, collected and printed closely on the vilest paper, made up the examination questions." Small wonder, then, that the whole form should dread the Greek exam. Or rather, the whole form, with the exception of Bradshaw – who is confident of having devised the perfect scheme to miss the exam and escape unpunished. What aids him is the accidental discovery that the metallic bolt of the school's science museum door forms part of the electric circuit that lights up the room, and that the current has somehow gone wrong. How he does it forms the highlight of the delightful story, 'A shocking affair'.

Tales of St. Austin's (1902), one of P.G. Wodehouse's early and less-known works, is an artistic masterpiece. Students will love the author's impish sense of humour.

Parvati's Wedding - 2

It was a peculiar boon Tarakasura had demanded of Brahma – that only a son of Lord Siva could kill him, and no one else!

Like everyone else Tarakasura knew that Siva was an ascetic and there was no chance of his marrying again and begetting a son. The boon meant that Tarakasura was as good as immortal!

Brahma advised Indra, "Only Siva can help you. For Tarakasura to be slain, Siva must be persuaded to marry and start a family."

The gods were aghast. To confront the irascible Siva, who was still grieving for his late consort, with such a request was tantamount to committing suicide.

The gods came up with a plan. The only one to make the divine ascetic succumb to a maiden's charms was Kamadeva, the god of Love. So, they met him.

"Everything depends on you, Kama!" pleaded Indra. "You must shoot your arrows of passion, so that Siva falls in love with Parvati and marries her."

But when Kamadeva heard the request, he was shocked. "So you expect me to risk life and limb for this crazy plan of yours?" he fumed. "Do you think Siva will spare me if he catches me?"

"But he'll never catch you, dear Kama," wheedled Indra craftily. "You're so good at your job. There's no creature, great or small, whom you cannot tame!"

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Finally, Kamadeva and wife Rati set out on their mission.

As they reached

Kailas, the icy climate of the mountain peak underwent a dramatic change. Gone were the chill and frost, to be replaced by the balmy weather of spring. Bushes and trees were covered with colourful flowers. The air was heady with fragrance.

Kamadeva soon spotted Siva sitting in meditation. He hid behind a tree, waiting for an opportune moment to strike. Moments later, Parvati arrived there. She worshipped Siva with the flowers she had brought.

This was just the moment Kamadeva had been waiting for! Quickly he took his bow and shot an arrow of passion at Siva's heart.

The arrow found its mark. Siva opened his eyes and saw Parvati before him. All of a sudden, his heart was filled with a hitherto unknown sensation of love for the girl who was serving him so devotedly.

But the very next moment, Siva frowned. What had happened to breach his self-discipline and make his heart let him down so uncharacteristically?

His eyes soon fell on Kamadeva, who was just then aiming yet another flowery arrow at him. He now understood what was happening.

Kamadeva went pale as he saw Siva glaring at him; but before he could do anything, the enraged

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Siva opened his fiery third eye. Instantly, a volley of flames emerged from it, to reduce the errant god to a heap of smouldering ashes!

Parvati was terrified to see Siva in such fearsome fury. She ran home.

The heart-broken Rati threw herself at Siva's feet, pleading for forgiveness. She told him her husband had not intended to disturb his penance.She beseeched him to restore Kamadeva to life. Soon Siva's anger cooled, and moved by pity he relented. Kamadeva was resurrected, but he would thenceforth be invisible. Only Rati could see him.

Meanwhile, back in her palace, Parvati was grief-stricken. At this juncture, they had a welcome visitor – Sage Narada. King Himavan told him all that had happened.

Narada told Parvati, "Don't worry! All is not lost. I'll teach you a mantra. Use it to meditate on Siva. Your devotion will certainly win his heart."

Narada's words inspired Parvati with fresh confidence. Having learnt the mantra from him, she took leave of her parents, and repaired to a lonely mountain peak for penance.

As days passed, the severity of Parvati's penance increased. In the peak of summer, she stood meditating under the blazing sun, surrounded by fire. As summer gave way to winter, she continued her penance, now standing neck-deep in icy-cold water.

In course of time, the intense heat generated by her penance threatened to destroy the three worlds. Disturbed, the gods, led by Vishnu and Brahma, went to Siva and told him what was happening. They also informed him of the menace of the demon Tarakasura and the boon he had obtained, that he could only be killed by a son of Siva.

"Lord, the time has come for you to end your ascetic life," said Brahma earnestly. "For the good of the whole universe, you must marry Parvati and beget a son!"

Siva gave the gods a patient hearing. Finally he said, "Please give me some time. I must see for myself whether Parvati's devotion is genuine." The gods agreed.

Soon, Parvati spotted a wizened old man approaching her. As he was dressed as an ascetic, she greeted him respectfully and offered him fruits to eat.

"What is the object of your penance, daughter?" asked the old man.

When Parvati told him that she wished to win Siva's heart, he burst out – "What! That beggar who haunts the cremation ground, dressed in tiger-skin and wearing snakes as garlands! Forget him, dear – he's in no way a match for a beautiful princess like you!"

On hearing this, the gentle Parvati was so beside herself with fury that she could not speak for a moment. Then she cried, "I was a fool to have mistaken a sinner like you for an ascetic! Don't say a word more against my chosen lord!"

Lo and behold, in the place of the old man stood Siva! Overcome by shyness, Parvati blushed.

"Forgive me, my dear," said Siva. "I was only testing you. I hardly need tell you that you've passed my test!"

The wedding of Siva and Parvati, which took place not long afterwards, was a grand affair attended by all the gods, sages, and kings.

- *Retold* ***Rajee Raman***

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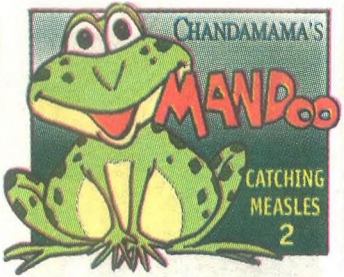

Malli is worried.
I don't mind, Mandoo. I'll take you to the doctor.
Mandoo refuses to go with her.
Soon Malli leaves, worried about Mandoo.

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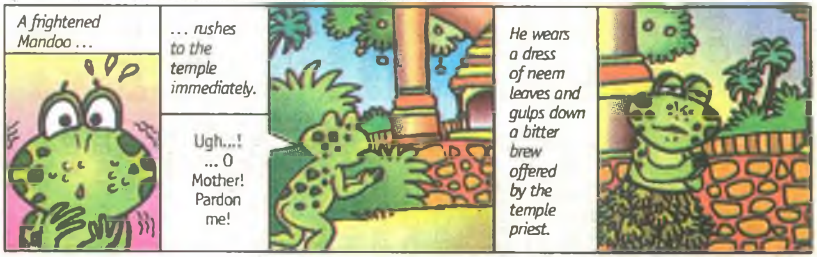
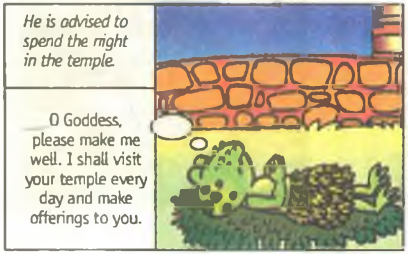
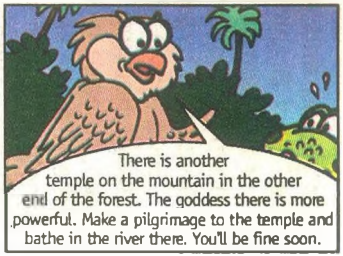

A frightened Mandoo ...
... rushes to the temple immediately.
Ugh...! ... O Mother! Pardon me!
He wears a dress of neem leaves and gulps down a bitter brew offered by the temple priest.


He is advised to spend the night in the temple.
O Goddess, please make me well. I shall visit your temple every day and make offerings to you.
MANDOO-CD 24/3

At night, Gooba Owl flies by the temple.
Mandoo..? What is he doing in the temple at this hour?
He finds out the details from Mandoo.


There is another temple on the mountain in the other end of the forest. The goddess there is more powerful. Make a pilgrimage to the temple and bathe in the river there. You'll be fine soon.

It is a tedious journey through an arid, rocky region. Sharp rocks just all over the place. Mandoo steps on a shaky boulder...

... and tumbles down...

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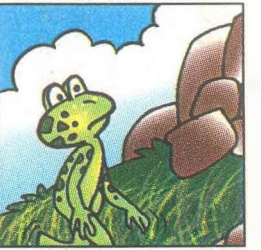
... into a bed of thorns!

A badly bruised Mandoo picks out the thorns and...

.... ambles his way up the mountain.



He is tired and thirsty and searches for water.

Phew! Where's the temple and the river that Gooba mentioned?

Finally, he spots the temple! He jumps in excitement...

... and steps on a scorpion.

MANDOO-CD 24/4

It stings him hard and poor Mandoo yells out in pain.

Call on God, but Row Away from the Rocks

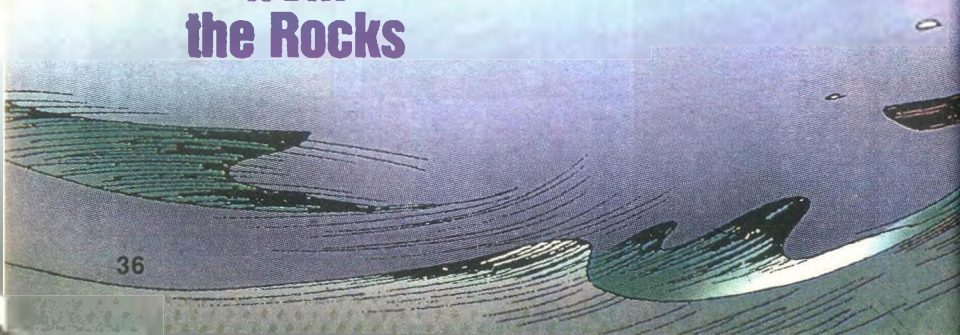
- *R.K. Murthi, New Delhi*

The village lay close to the seashore.

The waves ran in and out, lapping the seashore gently. Crabs ran in and out of holes in the golden sand with every passing wave. A million stars twinkled at the land and the sea. The wind was gentle and the air cool and refreshing.

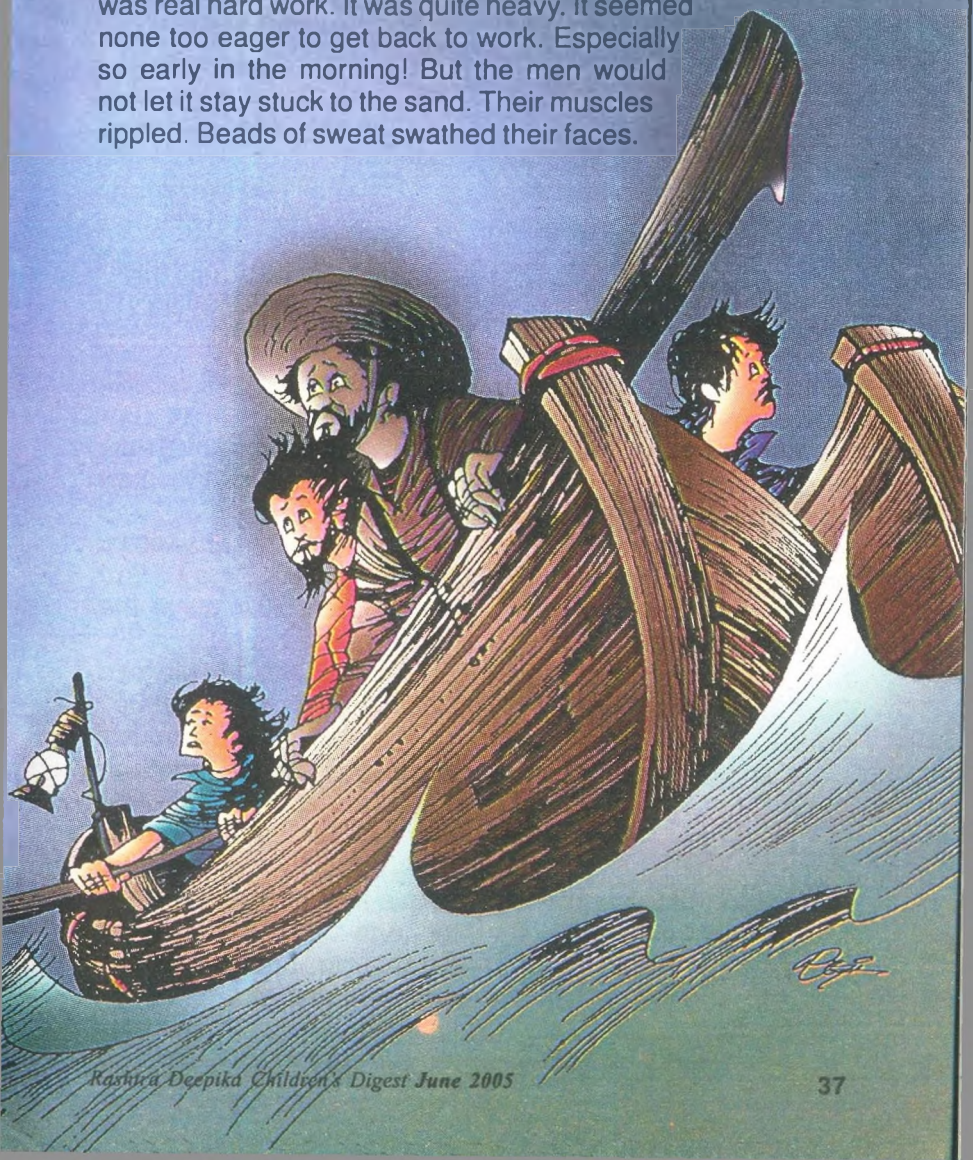
Dawn was still two hours away. But the village bustled with life. An old fisherman, around sixty, tall and slim and agile, with wrinkled face and hardened palms, came out of his hut and checked the sky. He smiled to himself, while calling out to his three sons, all of them young and strong and muscular, to join him. "Hurry up, lads, it is time we get going," he said.

The young men soon came out. The father led them. The three trailed behind him. Together they moved closer to their catamaran. It looked, from a distance, no more than a log of wood. Once upon a time, it had in fact just been a log of wood. But human hands had scooped out much of the wood. Now the log had space to take in four men. It had room not only for the net



and the oars, but also for the fish they hoped to catch.

The catamaran lay on a bed of sand. The four men heaved it, pulled it and nudged it closer to the waters. It was real hard work. It was quite heavy. It seemed none too eager to get back to work. Especially so early in the morning! But the men would not let it stay stuck to the sand. Their muscles rippled. Beads of sweat swathed their faces.



Yet they put in all their strength to get the catamaran slide closer to the sea. Finally a mighty wave came and the catamaran bobbed up with it. The men were alert. They jumped into the catamaran, one after the other. Then they grinned at each other. They had made it. They lifted their faces skywards, closed their eyes and prayed. Then they kissed the crosses, threaded to thick black cords that they wore round their necks, picked up the oars and started rowing. The old man started to sing a folk song. The three men sang with him, while working the oars. Music lightened their work. Or so they believed.

They rowed the catamaran beyond the waves. Far out into the sea. Then they dropped the oars, safely, inside the catamaran, hauled up the net and cast it out into the waters.

"God! Help us get a rich haul of fish!" the old man prayed.

His prayer was answered. Within hours they had enough fish piled up at the centre of the boat.

"God is great," the old man thanked the powers that be.

The men were ravenously hungry. They sat together, eating the sparse meal that they had packed and brought along. They then drank water from a huge cask that rested in one corner of the catamaran, cracked jokes, and teased each other, laughing wildly. Finally they

Did You Know?

In Ancient Greece, slaves were traded for salt, which gave us the expression 'not worth his salt'.

The Romans used to pay their soldiers in salt. The phrase 'sal dare' meant to give salt, and this gave us the word 'salary'.

Did You Know?

Pets like the sound of laughter, and most know when you're in pain.

decided to row back to the coast. They picked up the oars and started rowing.

Suddenly the wind turned wild. It ran in with shrieks and howls, reminding the men of foxes on the hunt. The sea turned violent, churning the waters ferociously. The boat swung around madly. The fishermen knew what it meant. The weather was changing for the worse. They had to hurry back home. The sea was no longer a safe place to be.

They rowed with all their strength. They fought the wind, setting a course that would take them to land. For some time, they had their way. Then the wind became really wild. It hissed and howled. Worry clouded their faces. None knew whether he would make it to land or find a watery grave.

"Only God can save us," said one of them.

"God is great," replied another.

"God is kind," noted a third.

The old man did not say a word. His lips were pursed; his face looked grim and stern. He was rowing with all his strength. Nothing else mattered to him.

"Why are you so silent?" asked one of the young men.

"Don't you believe in God? Don't you think He

Did You Know?

Houseflies watch each other constantly and follow each other to food sources. That's why there are always so many enjoying the same food.

Did You Know?

Hibernating ground squirrels' blood has four times the amount of ascorbic acid (Vitamin C) than their blood contains when they are not hibernating.

will answer our prayers?" asked the second man.

"I feel God will come to our rescue," the third man seemed confident.

Yet the elder did not say a word. He seemed to be lost in a world of his own. He was rowing, frantically, glaring at them and sternly signalling to them to keep rowing with all their strength.

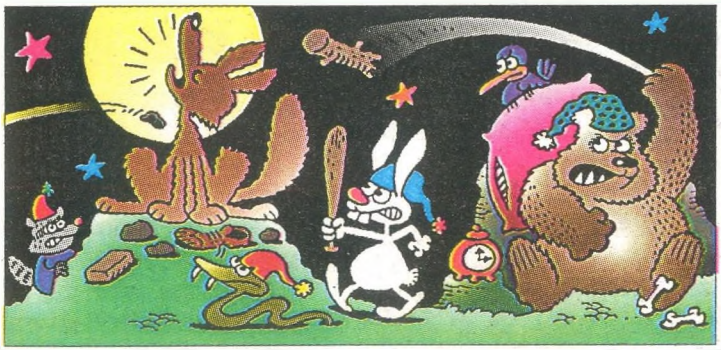
"Look at his eyes. They look stony," said one of the young men, taking a moment's break from rowing.

"Keep rowing. Or I will break your neck," the old man snapped, angrily.

Did You Know?

The word "photography" comes from the Greek words for light and writing. Johann von Maedler, a Berlin astronomer, first used the word in 1839.

True of False



1) Most wolves hunt alone.
2) Wolves howl only during a full moon.
3) A full-grown wolf can leap as high as a one-story building.
4) The leader of a wolf pack is usually female.
5) After a successful hunt, the wolf pups are allowed to eat first.

(See page 97)

"But why?" the young man hesitantly asked, holding his face low, too scared to face the old man.

"Look out, you fool. Don't you see the rocks out there? The wind and the waves will dash the catamaran against the rocks and that will be the end of us all. Now is the time for real hard work. Row for all that you care! Call on God, but row as far away as possible from the rocks, if you love life," the old man knew he had made his meaning clear. If they didn't manage to row the boat beyond the rocks, all of them would die.

The young men got the cue. They sensed that their lives were at stake. The rocks loomed, some distance away, taking the shape of a group of demons, waiting to crush them to death. The four men rowed on with all the strength at their command. Their muscles creaked and groaned. They panted for breath. Each time they moved the oars, they felt they would have no more strength left in them. Yet fear of death gave them added strength. The old man kept repeating the name of God now. The young men too did that. But not for a moment did they stop rowing. Together, they fought the wild wind and the restless sea. Finally they put the rocks far behind.

"The rocks won't get us, anymore," said the old man.

Did You Know?

The World Wide Web (www) was developed by Englishman Tim Berners Lee and his colleagues in Switzerland.

"We pulled ourselves out of danger. Thank God!" the old man grinned.

"What did God do?" the young men found the logic hard to understand.

"He gave us the wisdom to see the danger; and also the strength to fight our way to safety. Remember, my boys. Whenever you face danger, call on God, but . . ." he turned to them.

"Row away from the rocks," the young men completed the sentence.

●

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Rashtra Deepika
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P. B. No. 7,
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Kerala.

CIRCUS game

1st Prize Winners

1. N. G. Pavithra
   D/o N. R. Goverdhan
   Velachery
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2. Chandan Kumar
   S/o Bidya Sagar Gupta
   Computer Centre
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   Jamshedpur - 831014
   Jharkhand.

Consolation Prizes

3. Anshika Bali, Std VIII A,
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4. Amline Adline D'souza
   D/o Alwyn D'souza
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5. Neola Mascarenhas
   D/o Lancy Mascarenhas
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   Derebail, Dadalkkad
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Congratulations, dear young winners!

FUN TIME

Win Attractive Prizes!

PAINTER

Game

Hello little friends,

Here is an interesting game for you - a 'Fun Game' that brings to you wonderful gifts. So, get started and win your gifts.

Find out how many smaller words you can form from the word

PAINTER

Attractive Prizes!

Two entries with the highest number of words will get a surprise gift. Besides, there are three consolation prizes, too!

So rush your answers on a postcard to:

The Editor, Fun Time, Rashtra Deepika Children's Digest, P.B. No. 7, Kottayam, Kerala.

N.B.: Don't forget to put your address on the card. Also please don't repeat any letter more than the number of times it has appeared in the word.

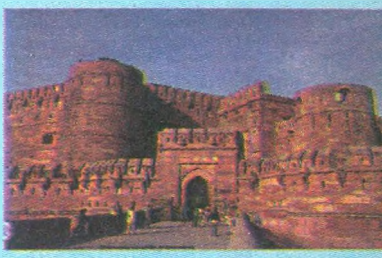
Slylock Fox

As the campers slept in the bone-dry desert, someone stole their money. One camper woke during the night and noticed Reeky Rat wasn't in his sleeping bag. Reeky insists he's innocent and claims he only got up to retrieve mosquito repellent from his backpack. Why does Slylock Fox suspect Reeky Rat is lying?

(See page 97)

RED FORT

Considered as the most magnificent palace in the east, the *Qila-e-Mualla* (the auspicious fort) or the Red Fort was built by the fifth Mughal emperor Shah Jahan. The work on the fort began in 1638, when Shah Jahan decided to shift his capital from Agra to Delhi on the banks of the River Yamuna. The work was completed in 1648.



The fort is an irregular octagon. First, there are the battlements – two and half km long and 18m in height. This is followed by the royal apartments – palace of colours, the sleeping room, the prayer room, the hall of public audience, the hall of special audience, royal baths, the music room, mosque, and the monsoon pavilions.

The fort was divided into regular squares and rectangles and included palaces, office buildings, cantonment, markets and quarters for the officials. The lofty rampart, tall gateways, the music hall and *Diwan-I-Am* were all built in red stone.

The music room was the main gateway to the *Diwan-I-Am*. All visitors except the royal princes had to get off their horses here and proceed further on foot.

A moat, 75 ft. wide and 30 ft. deep ran round the walls of the fort. The moat was filled with water and stocked with huge fish and crocodiles.

The fabulous peacock throne was placed in the *Diwan-I-Khas*. The throne was shaped in the form of two dancing peacocks with tails fanned out. The massive legs of the throne were studded with diamonds and emeralds. Above the throne was a gold-laced canopy. On either side were two human figures made of silk, gold, pearls and other precious stones.

"If on earth there be an Eden of Bliss –
It is this, it is this, oh it is this!"

These were the words engraved in gold on the walls of the *Diwan-I-Khas*.

Sam - the Naughty

Sam was a naughty lad
Who did not care for others
He did everything bad
Which wasn't liked by others.
Once he went to town
Wearing stylish pants and shirt
But he fell down
And was very much hurt.
He cried and cried
But no one listened to him
He loudly cried
"Eeee..... Aaaa....."

- Swathy Pradeep,
Std VIII A,
Amrita Vidyalayam,
Vellimadukunnu P. O.,
Kozhikode - 12.

God's Tears

A cool breeze blew
That put me to sleep, under the shade
Dreaming of a world with no war
And no news that hurts,
A world with happiness and peace.
But my dreams were left in air
To find men fighting
For reason left unguessed
Some say land, some say caste
Takes time to understand.
Is this "God's best creation?"
He might not have expected so,
With tearfilled eyes asks, He
"Did I ever create a mistake?"

- R. Neena Prasad, Std VIII A, St. Mary's Central School, Poojappura, Trivandrum, Kerala.

O Friend!

Thank you O friend for being in my life,
Thanks for taking me out of strife.
Your presence is always benign for me,
Your words are always soothing for me.
My life has bloomed with flowers,
Gone away are those tragic bars.
You held me tight when I was about to fall,
You made me run when I crawl.
How do I pay for your gratitude?
You held my hand
And became my friend.
You became the light of my way,
For my happiness a beautiful ray.

*- **Asma Shahid**, Std X, Sunway Senior Secondary School, Rampur, U.P.*

My Best Friend

She is beautiful,
she is nice,
She runs fast but, I'm slow
She is good in studies, I'm too;
But she is different, I'm too.
Her dreams are lovely, mine too;
We want to work in NASA
Oh far sure it is going to be true,
But she's different, I'm too.
She dances well, she is sensitive,
We are bold and brave at all times
She draws very well, me too!

*- **Akshatha W. G.**, Std V A,
Cluny Convent High School,
Malleswaram,
Bangalore - 560003.*

Pen Pals

1. K. Deepika(12), Std VII B, Jawahar Navodaya Vidhyalaya, Malampuzha P. O., Palakkad - 678651, Kerala. H&I: Painting, drawing and reading.
2. Jitendra Dev(12), Std VII A, Tagore House, Sainik School, Kazhakootam, Trivandrum - 695585, Kerala. H&I: Playing football and reading.
3. Ullas D(12) Std VII A, Tagore House, Sainik School, Kazhakootam, Trivandrum - 695585, Kerala. H&I: Playing cricket and watching movies.
4. Arjun V.(13), S/o Viswanathan, Thevarote House, 2/213, AJA, Goundar Street, Kamaraj Nagar, Bhavani - 638301, Tamil Nadu. H&I: Collecting stamps and coins, playing cricket and watching T.V.
5. Sukumar Sanu(12), Sri Sathya Sai Vidhyapeeth, Katalur, Calicut - 673531, Kerala. H&I: Listening to music, playing cricket and reading.
6. Vikas Gaurav(14), Std VIII Kush House, Sainik School, Chittorgarh, Rajasthan. H&I: Reading and watching movies.
7. Mangesh Singh(12), Std VI A, Sri Sathya Sai Vidhyapeeth, Katalur, Calicut - 673531, Kerala. H&I: Collecting stamps, watching movies and playing football.
8. Sinchu S(15), Krishnappa Bldg., N. G. Halli, Nagasandra P.O., Bangalore - 560073. H&I: Reading, gardening and listening to music.
9. Ujjwal Raj A(12), Forest Quarters, Muliyar P.O., Kasargod - 671542, Kerala. H&I: Playing tabla, collecting stamps and coins and playing computer games.
10. Ashwin Cherian(15), Std IX A, St. Joseph's Boys' Higher Secondary School, Coonoor - 2, Nilgiris, Tamil Nadu. H&I: Playing football and basketball, reading and friendship.
11. Deepak Ramachandran(14), Othena House, Kuttumuck, R. V. Puram, Thrissur - 680631. H&I: Reading and playing football and computer games.
12. J. Gowtham Pandian(14), Roll No 4405, Chera House, Sainik School,

Welcome to Pen Pals CLUB

Send us particulars regarding your name and address, age, the standard you study, your hobbies and interests, to the following address

Co-ordinator,
Pen Pals Club,
Children's Digest,
P. B. No. 7,
Kottayam-686001,
Kerala, India.

Amaravathi Nagar, Coimbatore - 642102. H&I: Collecting stamps, playing football and friendship.

13. Robin K. C.(17), Kollamkudy, Manickamangalam P. O., Kalady, Ernakulam - 683574. H&I: Friendship, letter writing and reading.
14. Govind Pai(12), Flat No. 1, Lava Apartments, Bhagavathi Nagar, Kodialguthu West, Mangalore - 575003. H&I: Watching Cartoon Network, reading and chatting.
15. Srikanth C(13), Chundayil House, Thiruvalathoor P. O., Attingal Road, Palakkad - 678551, Kerala. H&I: Listening to music, reading and playing computer games.
16. Arun Jacob, Kolappillil, Cherukattoor P. O., Panamakam, Wayanad, Kerala. H&I: Playing chess, watching T.V. and reading.
17. D. Samyuktha(13), Std VIII C, F5, MICO Colony, 4th Avenue, Besant Nagar, Chennai - 600090, Tamil Nadu. H&I: Listening to music and reading.
18. Suhas Chandran(15), Sri Satya Sai Higher Secondary School, Puttaparthi, Ananthpur - 515134, A.P. H&I: Playing guitar and listening to music.
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20. Kezia Merin Ipe(15), Kochupurakal, Sangeetha Road, Perintalmanna P.O., Malappuram, Kerala. H&I: Collecting coins and stamps, drawing and watching T.V.
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23. Anju Jose Vithayathil(12), Std VII A, Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya, Malampuzha P. O., Palakkad. H&I: Painting, reading and listening to music.
24. Shrimukhi(12), Maharishi Vidya Mandir, Sipcot, Hosur, Tamil Nadu. H&I: Dancing, reading and watching T.V.
25. Sreedevi K. G(15), Sindhu Bhavan, Kanjampara Junction, Santhigiri P.O., Pothencode, Trivandrum - 695584. H&I: Gardening, reading and chatting.
26. Ajay Kumar(15), 4026 X A, Sainik School, Amaravathi Nagar, Udmalpet - 642102. H&I: Playing football and cricket, reading and friendship.

YOUNG ARTISTS

Nithin Thilak, VIII C, Kendriya Vidyalaya, Thrissur.

Sudarshan Gopal, II A, Apeejay School, Sheikh Sarai, New Delhi-110017.

M. Nishitha Mike, VIII A, Christuraja Matric. Hr. Sec. School, Marthandam.

Sonali Shah, V, Narmada Vidhyalaya, Narmada Nagar, Bharuch-392015.

Shubhagata Mittal, II, Mirambika School, B-24 Sarvodaya Enclave, New Delhi-17.

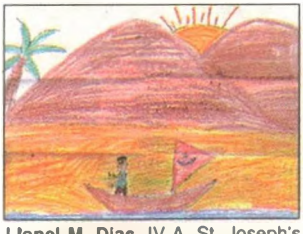
Akriti Gupta, VII B, Harvard Academy, Delhi.

V. Sanjay, IV, GC 7 Silver Jubilee Matriculation School, Villivakkam, Chennai-49.

Hariprasad C.M., VIII C, Kendriya Vidyalaya, Thrissur.

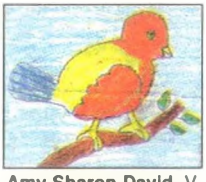
Raghav Gupta, I C, Harvard Academy, Delhi.

Navaneeth Krishnan, V C, Kendriya Vidyalaya, NAL, Bangalore-17.



Lionel M. Dias, IV A, St. Joseph's Boys High School, No.98, 18th Main, 6th Cross, BTM Layout EWS, Bangalore-76.

Nupur Gurjar, V B, Kendriya Vidyalaya, Malleswaram, Bangalore.



Amy Sharon David, V, Nivedha Mat. Hr. Sec. School, Porayur.

Nisha J. Nair, VII, Mahila Samiti English High School, Thakurli East, Maharashtra.

K. Sonal Vyas, VII B, Indiranagar Nursery & Primary School, Bangalore-38.

A.K. Suganya, VII, Sree Sankara Bala Vidhyalaya Matric. School, Ramanujam Street, T. Nagar-600017.

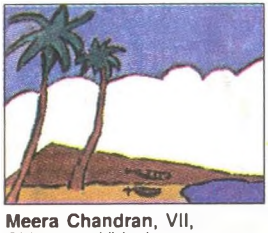
Kushal Saharan, V B, St. Mary's School, New Delhi.

U.K. Kiran, V A. Dr. GR Public School, Oorutukala, Neyyattinkara, Trivandrum.

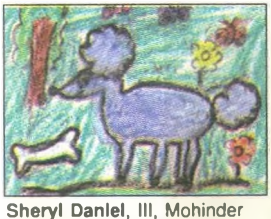
Akhil Varghese P., V A, St. Stephen's Bes-Ania Public School, Chelad P.O., Kothamangalam -686681.

Yohans Varghese, VI A, Chinmaya Vidyalaya, Kasaragod.

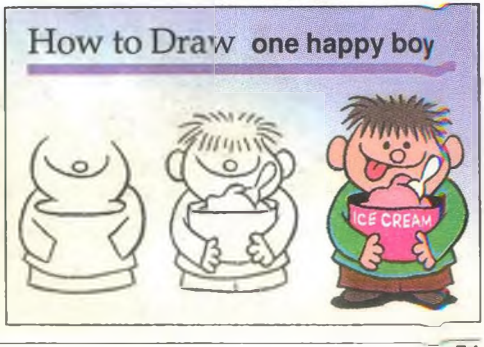
Veena Vijayan, V B, St. Mary's Residential Central School, Tiruvalla, Kerala.



Meera Chandran, VII, Chinmaya Vidyalaya, Kanhangad, Kasaragod.



Sheryl Daniel, III, Mohinder Singh Kabal Singh English School, Kalyan West, Maharashtra.



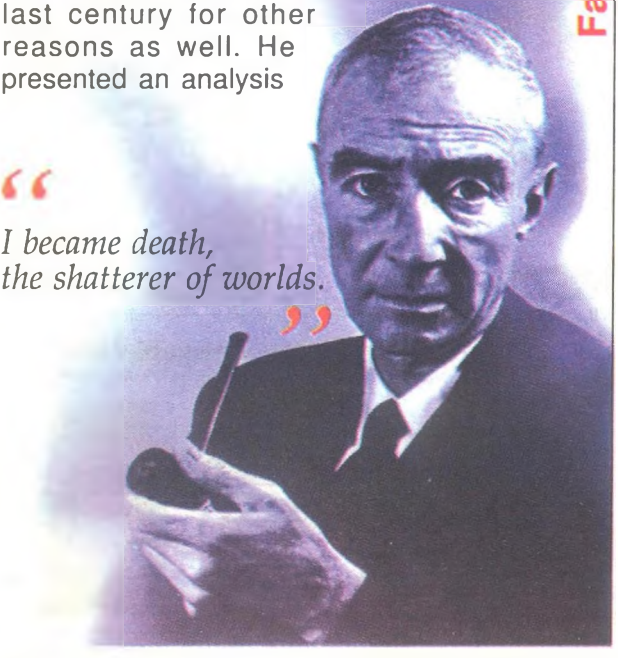
Robert J. Oppenheimer (1904 - 1967)

Father of the Atomic Bomb

- P. Gopalakrishnan

Robert J. Oppenheimer is often called the father of the atom bomb. It was chiefly through his able leadership that the bomb was developed. But he came to regret it and felt guilty for having helped to make a weapon that caused death and suffering in so large a scale.

Quite apart from the atom bomb, Oppenheimer merits mention as a distinguished scientist of the last century for other reasons as well. He presented an analysis



"*I became death,*
the shatterer of worlds."

of Paul Dirac's Relativistic Quantum Mechanics. He predicted the existence of a positively charged antiparticle of the electron. Later, this antiparticle was detected by a physicist C. D. Anderson working in a laboratory in California. Anderson named it "positron". Oppenheimer also developed the theory of electron showers observed in cosmic radiation. He showed that any massive star when its thermonuclear energy is exhausted will collapse to form a black hole which has mass but from which light will not escape.

Oppenheimer was born in a wealthy Jewish family of New York as the son of Ella and Julius Oppenheimer. Julius was born in Germany and had come to the U.S.A. when he was seventeen, while Ella belonged to a family settled in America for several generations. They had also migrated from Europe, though long ago.

His parents sent Robert to the "School for Ethical Culture" in New York. This school was noted for its secular outlook. Its founders believed in the principle that "the individual is sovereign and has the right to form his own view of the unknown". The school must have helped in fostering the independent spirit which was a trait of his character.

As a boy, Robert was happiest when learning. This endeared him to his teachers. His chemistry tutor once devoted an entire holiday to set up a small laboratory for Robert.

When he was about five he went on a trip to Germany. There his grandfather presented him with a collection of minerals. This triggered in him a lively

Did You Know?

Boxers are named for their playful habit of using their front paws in frolic.

interest in mineralogy, so much so that he became a scholar in the subject by the time he reached eleven, when he was admitted to the New York Mineralogical Club. He presented his first scientific paper, when he was eleven, at this club. People attending the meeting were amazed to find a scrawny kid with a sheaf of papers climbing up to the podium, and delivering his presentation. And when he finished reading, the audience stood up and gave him a thundering ovation.

But his intense interest in mineralogy cost him an academic year. Completing high school with the highest grades, he was about to join Harvard university when he went to Germany to collect minerals. There he contracted colitis and was laid up with the illness. It took a long time to recover and he was able to join the university in the next year only, when he was eighteen. He chose chemistry as his subject, and completed the four-year course in three years by working himself mercilessly. Towards the end of the course, physics began to attract him, and he started attending a class on advanced thermodynamics by

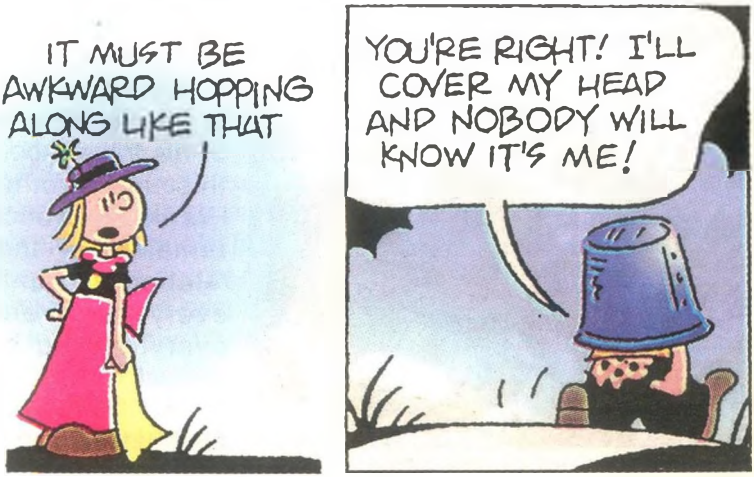
Did You Know?

Of all known forms of animal life ever to inhabit the Earth, only about 10 percent still exist today.

the distinguished physicist Percy Bridgman. The professor and student were later to develop a friendship of mutual respect.

Oppenheimer made friends only with his intellectual equals. Paul Dirae the Nobel prize winner was one of them. Whenever they met they almost always talked only of physics and Dirac was quite surprised to find one day that Oppenheimer had an intense interest in poetry. Dirac thought that poetry and physics were at opposite poles. "In physics we say things in such a way that people can understand them, and in poetry it's the exact opposite," he remarked. Oppenheimer's interest in poetry was so great that he learned Italian just to read Dante in the original!

He graduated from Harvard in 1925. Then he went to Europe and spent four years doing research in



Cambridge, Goettingen and Zurich, getting his Ph.D. from the University of Gottingen.

For some time after graduating from Harvard he became mentally ill. It developed while he was working under J. J. Thomson, the scientist who determined the mass of an electron later on. Friends recall that Oppenheimer had become extremely depressed, so much so that they feared he would commit suicide. He was feeling worthless and very lonely especially around Christmas of 1925. Around this time he went on a trip to Paris where he met up with an old friend and in the middle of their conversation attempted to strangle him. After this, he sought psychiatric help both in London and Cambridge. When his diagnosis was over three friends took him on a trip so that travel might effect a cure.

When he became normal he went to Gottingen, where he met a young woman named Charlotte Riefenstahl. She was also studying physics there. They became close and their relationship became quite intense for some time. Such feelings dwindled away fast however, with Oppenheimer finding that she didn't measure up to his exacting standards. Expecting too much of people was one of his traits. About this his brother Frank once remarked that "Robert wants everyone and everything to be special."

Oppenheimer with Albert Einstein.

In 1929 he returned to America

and held teaching posts at the University of California and the California Institute of Technology. He proved to be an outstanding teacher.

Absorbed in his studies and the theoretical world of physics, he lived separated from the real world around him, till he was called upon to direct the research on the nuclear bomb.

In 1942, Oppenheimer was appointed as the director of the project to develop the atom bomb. The project was under the U.S. Defense Forces and was kept top secret bearing the code name "Manhattan". Oppenheimer chose Los Alamos, a place deep in the New Mexico desert as the location of the project site.

He built a team of first rate scientists and delegated responsibility and made them feel that they were trusted. He organised a community of scientists unique in history as they were focussed on a single aim and devoted to it.

In 1945 four bombs were completed. But the story was moving somewhat towards an anticlimax, because, beaten by the Allied Forces of Britain, U.S.A., and the Soviet Union, Germany had surrendered by that time. But Germany's ally, Japan, hadn't surrendered and the war continued in the East. On August 6, 1945 an American fighter plane dropped an atomic bomb on Hiroshima, Japan. As the crew of the plane looked back on the city it seemed to disappear entirely, engulfed in billows and billows of smoke and fire. But no word of surrender was received from the Japanese. On August 9, another bomb was dropped on a second

DID YOU KNOW?

A large porcupine can have over 30,000 quills covering its body. All porcupines float in water.

Japanese city, Nagasaki, killing 40,000 people and destroying the city. Five days later on August 14, 1945 Japan surrendered, and the Second World War came to an end.

But death and suffering in the bombed cities didn't end with the war. As days and weeks went by, deaths in Hiroshima mounted to 1,45,000. The number who sustained injuries, most of them lifelong radiation injuries, were far more than those who died. They kept on dying during the next five years.

When the news reached the research camp at Los Alamos, the first reaction was of jubilation; their joint effort had succeeded! But as the terrible details of the destruction came pouring in, the jubilation turned into dismay and finally horror. For most of those scientists, many of them the biggest names in 20th century physics, a lifetime haunted by guilt would follow.

Oppenheimer carried this heavy load of guilt all his remaining life, perhaps to a far greater extent than any other scientist associated with the creation of the bomb. After all, he had a hand even in the decision for the military use of the bomb on Japan. He was one of a panel of four scientists who were asked in

Children's Favourite Author Receives Award

Kolkata-based popular author Vernon Thomas, whose stories have been featuring in *Children's Digest* for several years, was recently awarded the IPCA (Indian Catholic Press Association) Prize for his outstanding services to the media.

The event was hosted by IPCA Executive Committee Member for East and North East India, Fr. C. M. Paul. The function was sponsored by *The Statesman* of Kolkata.

May 1945 to advise on the use of the bomb in the war and who gave their assent. The other three were A. H. Compton, Enrico Fermi, and Ernest Orlando Lawrence. For the rest of his life, Oppenheimer remained acutely conscious of his responsibility in creating the bomb as well as in the decision to use it.

After the war the United States set up an Atomic Energy Commission for civilian control of atomic energy, and Oppenheimer was made its chairman. But when the U.S.A. wanted to develop an even more destructive hydrogen bomb, he opposed it. This turned the politicians against him, and he was accused of having communist leanings. It was true that he had friends who were communists. His wife and brother were leftists, perhaps even communists.

The result was that his security clearance was taken away, which meant that he could be suspected and watched. For some time this ended his influence in America's science policy. But in 1963, he was given the Enrico Fermi Award, which meant he was cleared of suspicion.

He accepted the post of the Director of the Institute of Advanced Study at Princeton and held it till his death. In the last years of his life he thought and wrote a great deal about the problems of ethics and morality in intellectual pursuits such as science. This suggests that the thought of the atom bomb he had helped to create might still have been haunting him. He died of throat cancer in 1967.

●

Did You Know?

The biggest shark species has the smallest teeth. The 12 metre long whale shark has more than 4,000 teeth, each only 3mm long.

- Prof. George John Nidhiry

Indian Saints and Poets

In 1952 the Department of Posts issued six stamps. The stamps depicted Kabir, Tulsidas, Mira Bai, Surdas, Ghalib and Tagore. The first four were leaders of the Bhakti movement prevalent in India during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The purpose of this movement was to bring about unity of life between Muslims and Hindus, particularly at the spiritual level.

Kabir was the teacher of Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism. Tulsidas wrote "Ramacharithamanasa." Mira Bai was the princess of Jodhpur. Surdas wrote many bhajans in praise of Krishna and Radha. Ghalib (1797-1869) was the Poet Laureate of Bahadur Shah II. Rabindra Nath Tagore (1861-1941), the poet-philosopher, won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1913. The British Government conferred a knighthood on him in 1915, but he returned it in 1919 as a protest against the British atrocities during the Jallianwala Bagh massacre in the Punjab.

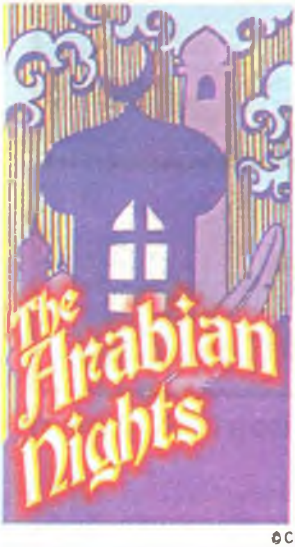
Snow Leopard

The scientific name of the Snow Leopard is Panthera

Uncia. Its family is Felidae, which includes the lion and the tiger. The Snow Leopard represents the transition between the small and great cats. It does not roar, but purrs like a domestic cat. Its habitat is the mountains of Central Asia and the Indian sub continent. It hunts at night on wild sheep and domestic livestock. The number of Snow Leopards is decreasing due to hunting for its magnificent fur. International trade of the species is prohibited under CITES. An Indian stamp on the Snow Leopard was issued in 1987 and a UNPA stamp in 1993.

Windmill

This device for tapping the energy of the wind by means of sails mounted on a rotating shaft was popular in Europe from the twelfth to the early nineteenth century. Windmills have been in use principally for grinding corn, cleansing cloth and for drainage. The development of the internal combustion engine and the spread of electric power from hydroelectric projects reduced their popularity. Now wind turbines are used to convert wind energy to electric power. The former East Germany issued four stamps on windmills in 1981.



Iqbal was a merchant. Till recently, he led a very peaceful life with his beautiful wife, Amina.

How was your day?

Fine, begum.

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But she suddenly fell ill and no medicine could cure her. Then one day....

I feel like eating an apple.

I'll get you apples right away, begum. Take care of yourself when I am not around.

Iqbal set out in search of apples. But they were not available in the market.

What shall I do? Amina will be so disappointed.

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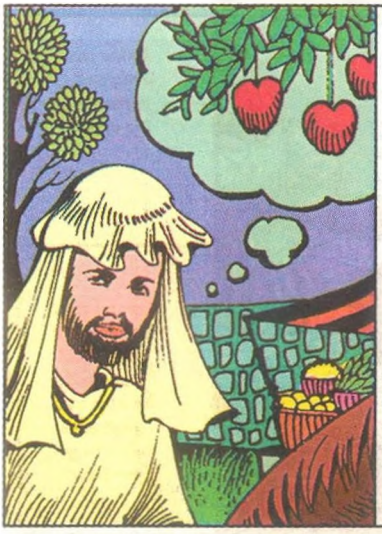
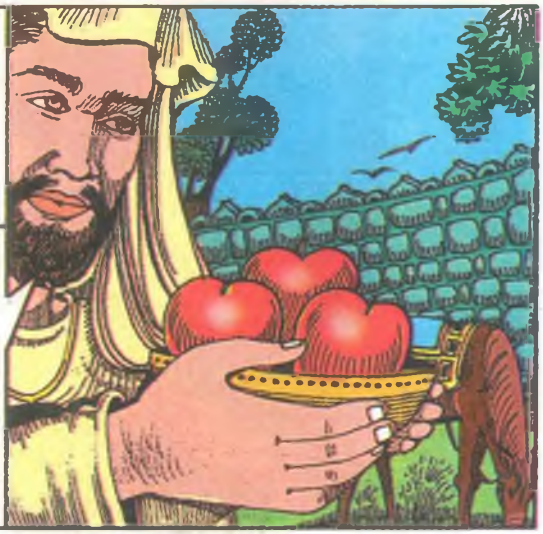


He remembered having seen apples in the orchards of Bassora.

Iqbal went to Bassora and bought three apples.

Three gold coins for three apples! But no price is too high to make Amina happy!



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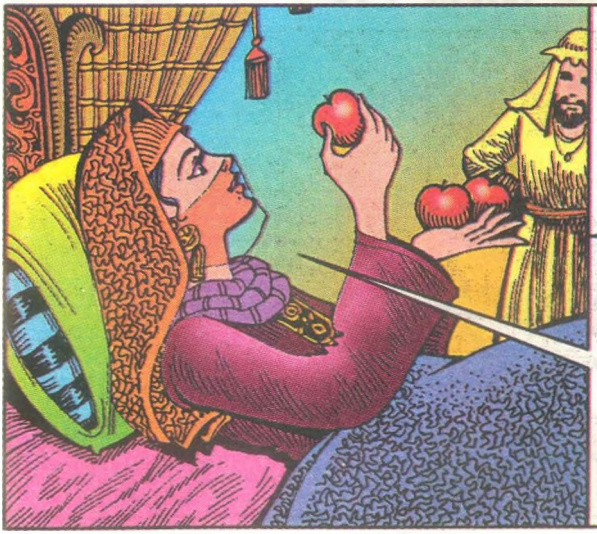
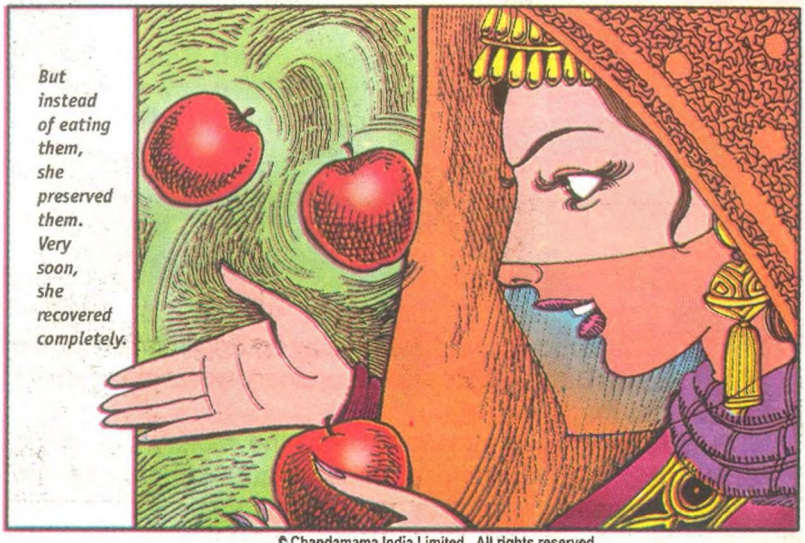


Amina was delighted to receive the apples.

I'm so happy. O thank you very much! How much trouble you must have taken to get me these!



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-Jee

Lawn Mower

The lawn mower was invented by an Englishman named Edwin Budding. He was an ordinary worker in a factory that made carpets.

Budding had to work a full day at the factory. Returning home in the evening, he had, often, to cut the grass around the house as well, and the grass would again grow as fast as he cut, as is usual in a fertile countryside. No wonder the young man felt his life to be a long drudgery, as he had little time to spend with his friends at the pub or even to take a stroll.

In those days, the early 19th century, grass cutting was a tiresome, difficult chore. Firstly the grass had to be sprinkled with water to make it wet and pliable. Then a long, thin knife had to be wielded, much in the style of an expert warrior of the ancient world cutting off enemy heads! Fed up, Budding pondered over some possible alternate way to

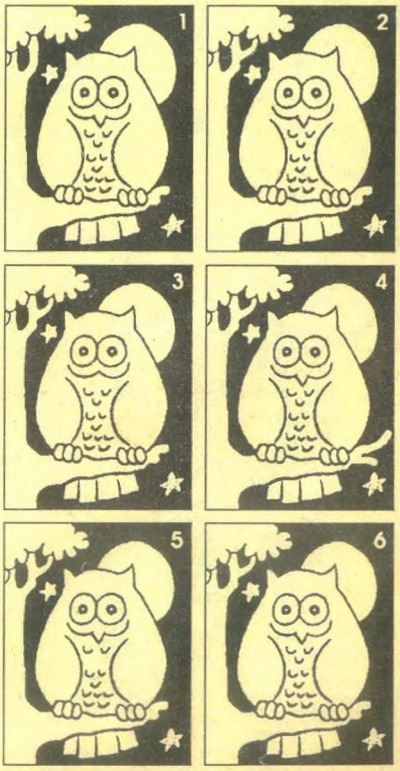
cut the grass.

A new machine had been brought to the factory. It was known as a rotary shearer. Budding watched its working. It was fitted with blades that spun around fast cropping excess fibres from carpets. If the machine could work so nicely on carpets, wouldn't it work on lawns as well, he asked himself. After all a lawn was nature carpeting the earth. He fitted rotating blades to a pushcart like device with wheels, imitating the shearer in the factory and thus the first lawn mower was born.

Edwin Budding was delighted at the performance of the machine he made. It did its work nicely and well.

The sale of the machine didn't catch on at first. The price was high for the times and probably people didn't think it was worth spending so much money on it, when they could as well cut their lawns with the traditional long blade. But with the aesthetic standards of people rising, beautifully groomed lawns around homes became symbols of refinement, and demand for the lawn mower arose gradually.

Try It...



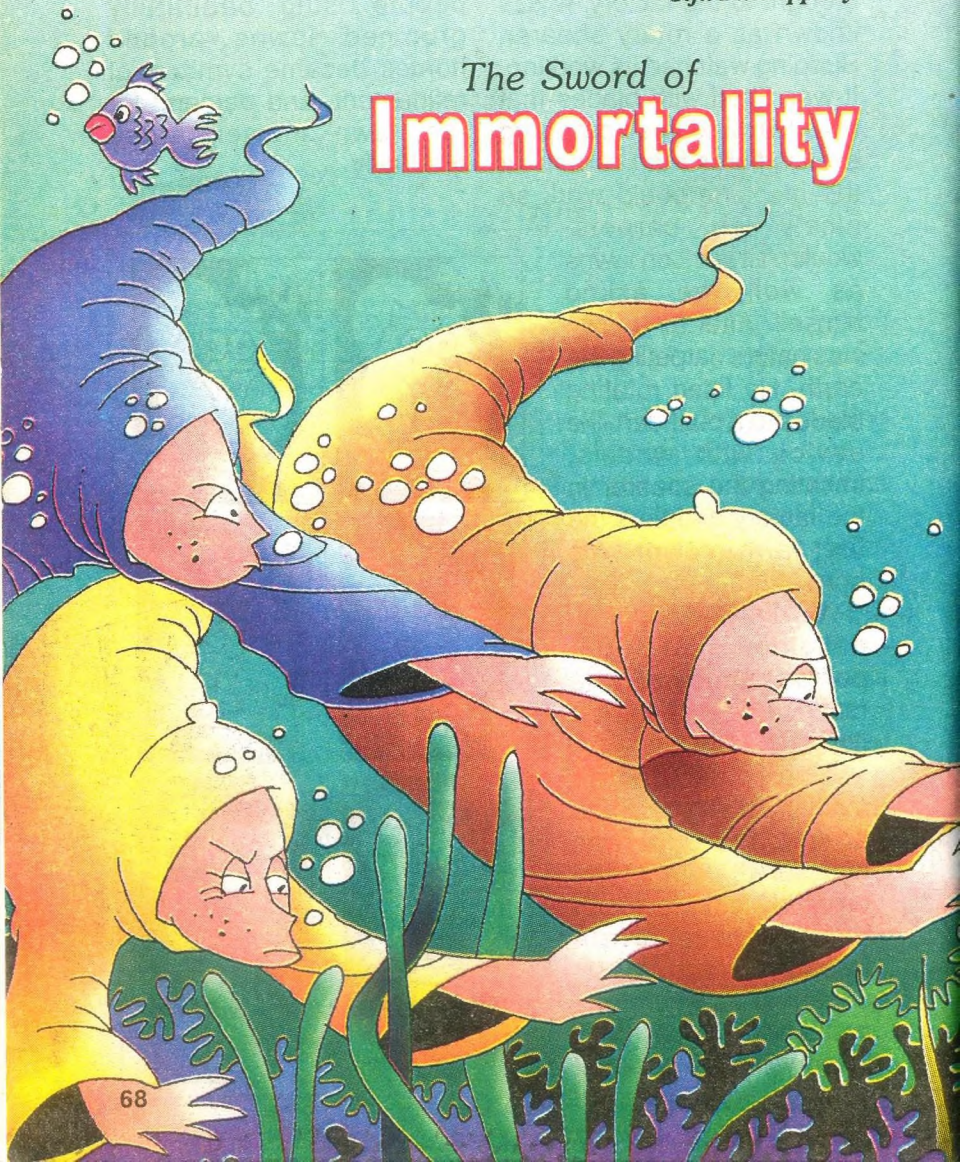
(See page 97)

Novel

Chapter Five

- *Ciju Puthuppally*

The Sword of Immortality



The triplets swam to the very bottom of the lake, looking for the Mortapulco plant that they needed. But so far they had found no signs of it. There were many other plants- dirty green ones and clean yellow ones. The bottom of the lake was filled with plants and stones. It looked beautiful. There were only little fishes at the bottom, and no Mer-Men.

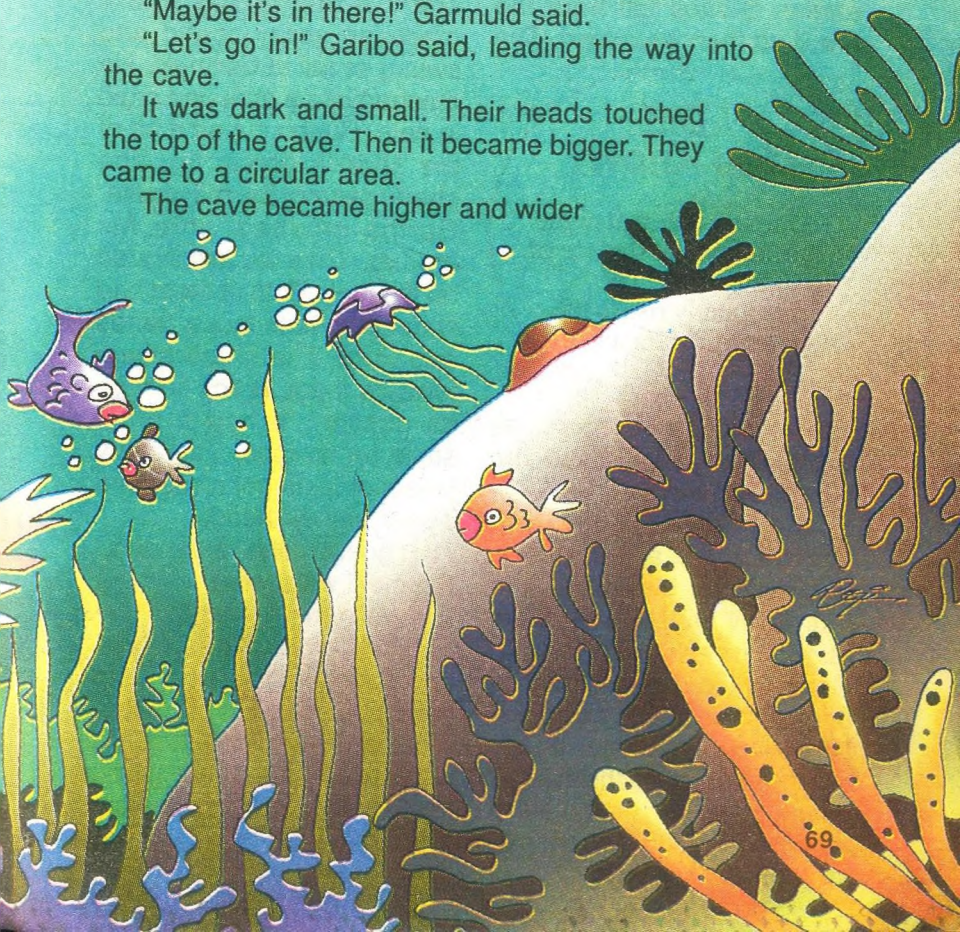
The triplets felt the plants and smelled each one of them to know if it was the Mortapulco plant. They knew what it looked, felt and smelt like. But it was not there. They swam to the right till they saw what looked like a cave.

"Maybe it's in there!" Garmuld said.

"Let's go in!" Garibo said, leading the way into the cave.

It was dark and small. Their heads touched the top of the cave. Then it became bigger. They came to a circular area.

The cave became higher and wider



in this place. They looked around in silence. And there it was, lying in the middle. The Mortapulco plant! It was purple, long and thin. It lay in a pile of sand in the middle of the circular area.

Slowly, the triplets approached it. As they got near it, the cave began to shake. Stones fell from the top. And then it stopped. The

Did You Know?

Dolphins sleep at night just below the surface of the water. They frequently rise to the surface for air.

triplets watched in horror as a big shark swallowed the Mortapulco plant.

"No!" Garith cried.

He lunged at the shark, unsheathing his sword. He ran at full speed. The shark simply opened its mouth. Garith could not stop himself because he was running at full speed, and he ran straight into the mouth of the hungry shark.

"Garith!" Garmuld and Garibo cried in dismay. Now they were getting angry, really angry. Tears streamed down their young faces as they swung their swords at the shark. The shark opened its mouth again but the two triplets did not fall for that. Garibo cut off some of the shark's teeth. The shark made an angry sound and swung its tail at Garmuld. He crashed into a rock and cried in pain. Garibo cut off a bit of the shark's dorsal fin. The shark swung its tail again. Garibo crashed into his brother. They lay exhausted on the rock. Both of them had wounds on their faces, hands and legs. The shark swam towards them, ready to have its dessert. It had a cruel smile on its face. The shiny layers of teeth got closer and closer to their heads.

"I guess... this is the end," Garmuld whispered.

"We were so close..."

They closed their eyes and waited for the teeth to rip their bodies apart. But that moment never came. A sword cut through the shark's gills from the inside. It made a big

Did You Know?

Butterflies cannot fly if their body temperature is less than 86 degrees.

hole in the shark's body. The shark tried to breathe, but it couldn't. It was dead.

"Garith!" Garibo and Garmuld exclaimed.

Garith walked out of the hole, the Mortapulco plant and his sword triumphantly in his hands.

"You're alive!" Garibo said happily.

"And you've got the plant!" Garmuld said.

"It's time we got out of here," Garith said, and they swam out of the cave and up to where Jerome, Garman and Wiseman were fighting the Mer-Men.

"We've got the plant!" Garith yelled. "Let's get out of here, quick!"

They fled from the Mer-Men and out of the lake.

"Well done, dwarves," Garman said to the triplets. "I'm very proud of you."

"Now we need to go back and give this to Adavin," Wiseman said. He looked at the Mortapulco plant. "I hope this works."

They started their long walk back to Dane's castle. But Dane was in the Black Palace, locked up in the small cell, hoping someone would come to his rescue.

(To be continued)

Did You Know?

The practice of putting a letter "e" in front of words to mean "web-based" (e.g., eBusiness, eLearning, etc.) was patented by Microsoft in 1992. They are waiting until their anti-trust trial has been officially completed to begin enforcing it.

ONCE UPON A TIME A POOR WOOD-CUTTER LIVED NEAR A FOREST, WITH HIS WIFE AND THREE DAUGHTERS.
OH ....: BECAUSE OF RAIN THERE IS NO FIRE-WOOD IN THE FOREST.
Molly fools the giant
A FOLK TALE
- MOHAN/SIMI -
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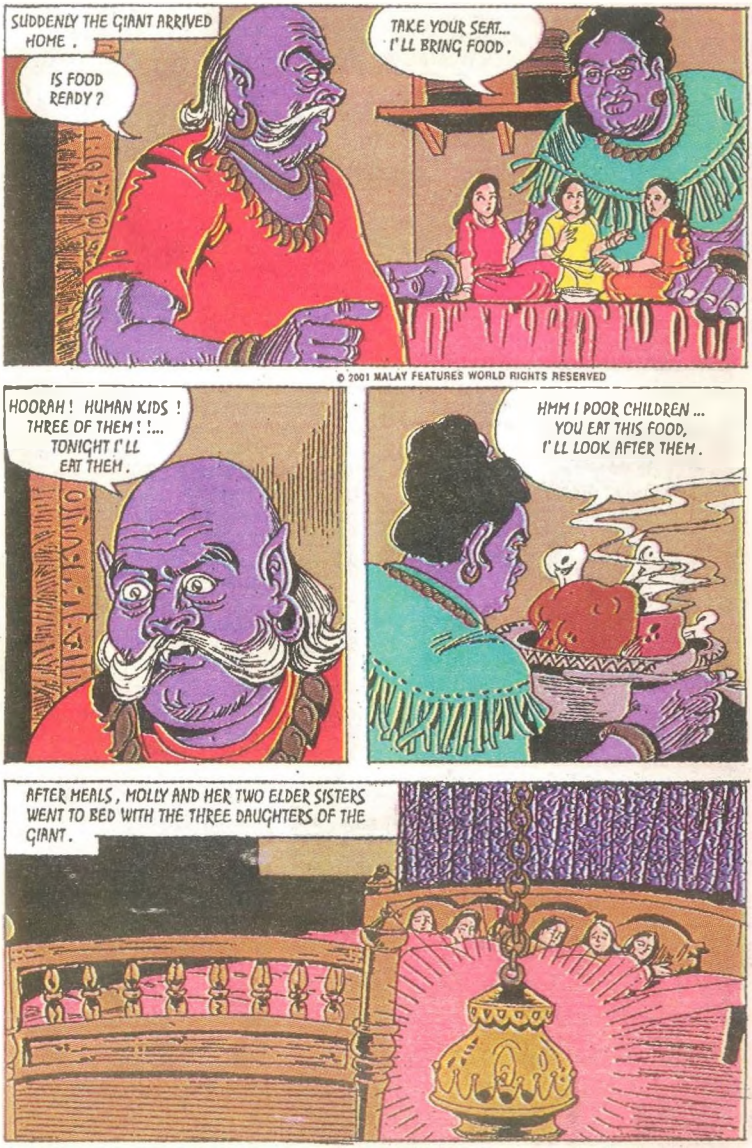
HOW CAN WE SEE THEM STARVING ? LET'S OFFER THEM TO THE GODDESS OF THE FOREST.
HAVING DECIDED SO, THE WOOD-CUTTER TOOK HIS DAUGHTERS TO THE FOREST ...
YOU STAY HERE. I'LL COME SOON ..
OK ... FATHER .
© 2004 MALAY FEATURES WORLD RIGHTS RESERVED
THE WOOD-CUTTER DIDN'T COME BACK TILL NIGHT.
IT'S ALREADY NIGHT! WHERE'S OUR FATHER ?!
HOW WILL WE GO HOME ?

THE YOUNGEST DAUGHTER HOLLY WAS A COURAGEOUS GIRL.
NO USE CRYING! THIS IS FOREST... WE SHOULD FIND OUT A PLACE TO SLEEP.
OH! THICK DARKNESS.
I'M AFRAID!
WHEN THEY WALKED SOME DISTANCE...
A CASTLE THERE!
LET'S GO THERE...
WE MAY GET SOME FOOD.
THEY KNOCKED AT THE DOOR OF THE CASTLE.
TICK... TICK...

THE DOOR WAS OPENED BY A MONSTROUS WOMAN.
HUMAN CHILDREN! WHY DID YOU COME HERE?
EEOW...
THE GIRLS TOLD THE WOMAN...
PLEASE HELP US!
DON'T YOU KNOW THAT MY HUSBAND EATS HUMANS? HE MAY EAT YOU.
HEARING THIS, THE YOUNGEST GIRL DIDN'T LOSE HER COURAGE.
MOTHER, WE ARE VERY HUNGRY. WE DIDN'T EAT ANYTHING TODAY.
© 2001 MALAY FEATURES WORLD RIGHTS RESERVED
THE GIANT'S WIFE GAVE FOOD TO THE CHILDREN.
MOTHER! THANKS... YOU ARE KIND.


SUDDENLY THE GIANT ARRIVED HOME .
IS FOOD READY ?
TAKE YOUR SEAT... I'LL BRING FOOD .
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HOORAH ! HUMAN KIDS ! THREE OF THEM ! !... TONIGHT I'LL EAT THEM .
HMM ! POOR CHILDREN ... YOU EAT THIS FOOD, I'LL LOOK AFTER THEM .
AFTER MEALS , MOLLY AND HER TWO ELDER SISTERS WENT TO BED WITH THE THREE DAUGHTERS OF THE GIANT .

AT MIDNIGHT. THE GIANT CAME INTO THE GIRLS' BED ROOM. HE PUT THREE GOLD CHAINS ON HIS DAUGHTERS' NECKS AND THREE STRAW CHAINS ON HOLLY'S AND HER SISTERS' NECKS.
HA ...-HA .... ! LET MY WIFE SLEEP THEN I'LL CARRY YOU OFF.
BUT HOLLY WAS NOT ASLEEP.
?!..
SHE EXCHANGED THOSE CHAINS.
LET THE GOLD CHAINS BE ON OUR NECKS.
AFTER SOME TIME THE GIANT CAME AND TOOK AWAY THE THREE GIRLS WITH STRAW CHAINS.
SISTERS ! WAKE UP ! ! WE 'RE IN DANGER.
BE QUICK ! WE MUST ESCAPE FROM HERE.
SHH !... DON'T MAKE NOISE !

Who Dun It?

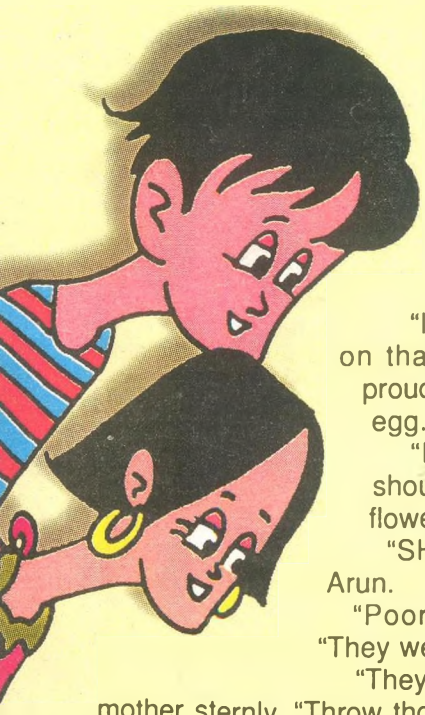
The popular magazine, *Crime Digest*, has just finished serialising five murder mysteries in quick succession. Each is set in a different locale, and features a murder for a different motive. Using the clues given below, can you find out who murdered whom, for what motive, and where?

The murderers are an artist, a businessman, a dentist, a plumber and a lawyer and their victims (not necessarily in that order) are a cousin, friend, mother, partner and sister. The motives for the murders (again not in order) are blackmail, inheritance, love, power, and revenge.

1. The locales are Bhilai, Delhi, Mumbai, Guwahati and Hyderabad.
2. Neither the businessman nor the plumber was responsible for the murder (which took place in Bhilai) for the sake of an inheritance.
3. The revenge killing didn't take place in Mumbai or Delhi. The artist didn't kill the partner (who was neither the victim killed in revenge nor the one murdered as the result of a power struggle).
4. The dentist murdered a cousin (but not for revenge or love) in Hyderabad.
5. The sister wasn't murdered in Bhilai or Mumbai; and the victim in the Mumbai murder wasn't the one killed for the love of someone. The businessman didn't murder his partner.
6. In the novel in which the lawyer murders someone, the motive is power, but didn't involve the killing of a friend.

Solution

Murderer	**Victim**	**Place**	**Motive**
Artist	Friend	Bhilai	Inheritance
Businessman	Sister	Guwahati	Revenge
Dentist	Cousin	Hyderabad	Blackmail
Plumber	Partner	Delhi	Love
Lawyer	Mother	Mumbai	Power



Story

THE FLOWERPOT HOUSE

- *Hema Rao, Chennai*

Mama pigeon was in a big hurry. She had to lay her eggs!

"I put the woody twigs in a flower pot on that balcony," cooed papa pigeon proudly. "So dear, go ahead and lay that egg."

"Make those birds fly away!" shouted Arun's mother angrily. "I want flowers, NOT birdie eggs!"

"SHOO! SCAT! FLY AWAY!" yelled Arun.

"Poor pigees," sighed Veena sadly. "They were just taking a rest."

"They were building a twiggy nest!" said mother sternly. "Throw those twigs away and keep an EYE on that pot. I DON'T want baby pigeons in my house."

But Arun and Veena had better things to do.

"I'm reading a funny book," said Veena.

"I HAVE to watch Scooby Doo," said Arun.

So they did NOT see papa pigeon come back with more thin twigs!

But Arun's mother saw him. She was watering the plants on their balcony.

"SHOOOO!" she shouted furiously. "I TOLD you, NO birds

in my house!"

Mama and papa pigeon flew away. However, they soon came back. Mama pigeon was determined to lay her eggs in any flowerpot! NO ONE was around. Mama pigeon quickly sat down on a flowerpot.

"But I have not made our twiggy nest!" said papa pigeon.

"DON'T care!" cooed mama pigeon angrily. "I can't carry my eggs all day long!"

Mama pigeon happily laid two eggs in the pot. Now she could NOT fly away. Her little babies were in the eggs!

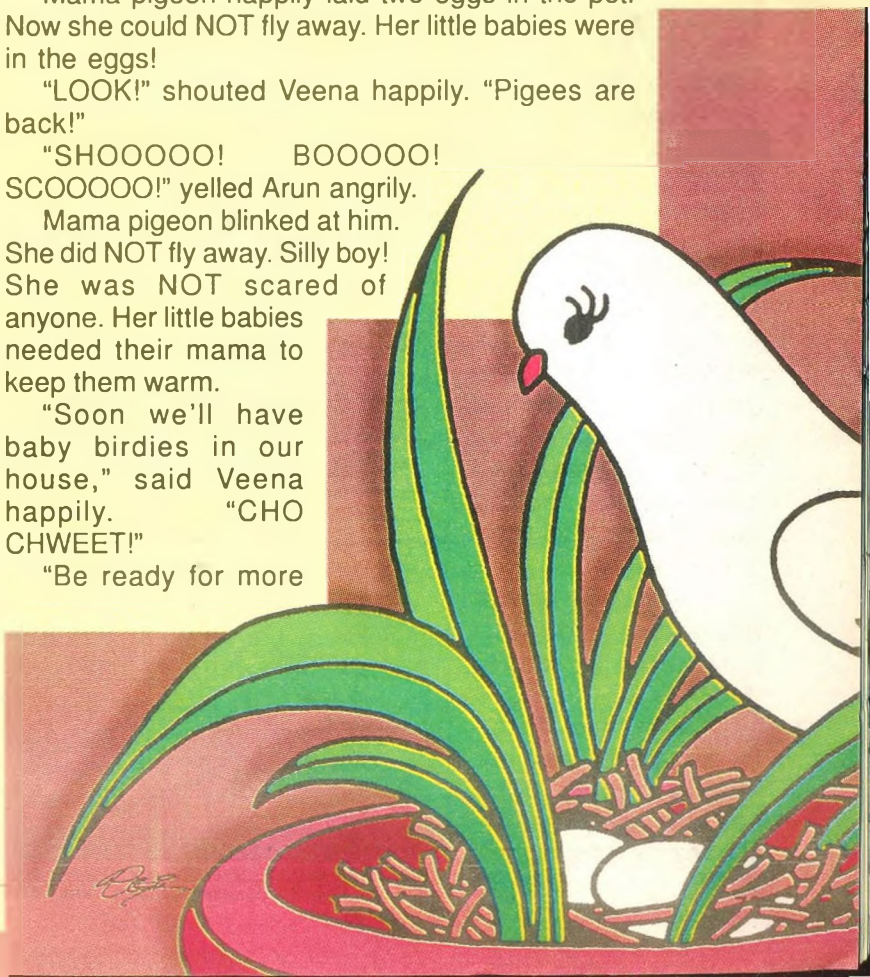
"LOOK!" shouted Veena happily. "Pigees are back!"

"SHOOOOO! BOOOOO! SCOOOOO!" yelled Arun angrily.

Mama pigeon blinked at him. She did NOT fly away. Silly boy! She was NOT scared of anyone. Her little babies needed their mama to keep them warm.

"Soon we'll have baby birdies in our house," said Veena happily. "CHO CHWEET!"

"Be ready for more



Did You Know?

Men can read smaller print than women; women can hear better.

work to do!" said her mother angrily.

"Work?"

"You will have to SCRUB and CLEAN and SHOUT!" retorted mother sarcastically.

Many days later the baby pigeons wriggled out of the eggs.

"Look! Baby pigees! CHO CHWEET!" said Veena excitedly.

Papa and mama pigeon were very happy. They now had two little featherless babies. Mama and papa pigeon poked their beaks into their babies' mouth.

"THEY will choke them to death!" shrieked Veena. "MUMMY!"

"They are force feeding them," said her mother angrily. "The squabs get yellow cheesy milk from their parents' crop."

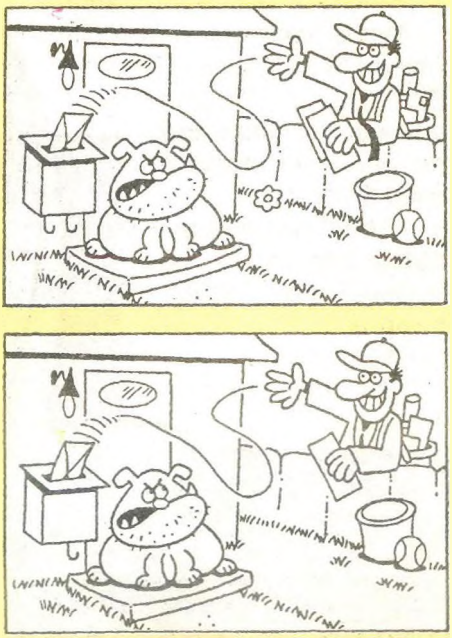
"What are squabs? Pigeons are not farmers. How can they grow crops?"

"My dear little ignoramus, baby pigeons are called squabs," said her mother. "Crop means throat!"

"Pigeons are NOT cows. How can they give milk?" asked Arun.

"Pigeon 'milk' is digested

Try It... Find six differences between these two panels.



(See page 97)

food," said mother.

"Yuck!" squealed Veena, feeling very, very sick!

"You screamed as if a banshee was after you!" laughed Arun.

"The babies were squealing and flaying around," said Veena angrily. "I didn't know they were very hungry."

"You SCREAMED!" taunted Arun.

"Your scream scared me!" said mother angrily.

Mother looked at Arun and Veena solemnly. "Get ready. You NOW have lots of work to do!"

"Papa and mama pigeon will take care of them," said Arun.

"Teacher says pigeons molly coddle their young," said Veena. "They DON'T need our help."

"But you still will have WORK to do!" said their mother ominously. "Now you'll understand why I told you to keep an EYE on that pot!"

Mother was right. Both had lots of work to do! The pigeons did NOT dirty the flowerpot. But they did dirty the balcony. The babies DID what all babies DO, only OUTSIDE the flowerpot!

"They keep THEIR home clean, but NOT their environment," grumbled Veena angrily.

She had to clean up the smelly pigeon poop. It was tough work. The suspicious squabs kept screeching and rearing their heads threateningly, every time she went onto the balcony!

Did You Know?

Petroleum geologists look for salt deposits to lead them to oil and gas. Because of its impervious nature, salt deposits stop oil and gas escaping, and so form a natural underground reservoir.

Arun spent all his time 'shooing' away the hungry crows.

"Keep it up!" said his mother tauntingly. "Pray NO cat, eagle, hawk, snake or rat comes on our balcony. You will have to 'shoo' them away too!"

Mama and papa pigeon were very happy. Papa

pigeon did NOT have to keep a look out for enemies. Arun was doing THAT work for him.

"It's tiring always keeping an EYE on the balcony," grumbled Arun, the watchman.

"It's horrid sweeping that stinky mucky stuff and nearly getting pecked for trying to maintain hygiene in our house," said Veena. "Pigees are very DIRTY birds!"

"Keep a bowl full of water for the pigeons," said mother.

"NOW I have to become a waterman too!" grumbled Arun.

"The squabs will soon have to eat solid food," said mother. "The parents will drink lots of water after having their meal. Then they will feed the squabs a very watery meal! So DON'T forget to fill water into the bowl."

"It's ages since I read a story book," said Veena wistfully.

"It's ages since I watched my Crazy Toons!" retorted Arun angrily.

"THAT'S what you get for NOT keeping an EYE on my flowerpot!" said their mother unsympathetically.

The baby pigeons were growing rapidly. They now had feathers. They fluttered their wings angrily whenever anyone walked onto the balcony. Even Arun was too scared to venture out near them!

"Now who is a scared cat?" mocked Veena. "Arun hero is

How Do Fish Breathe Underwater?

Fish get oxygen from the water just as we get oxygen from the air. But they absorb the oxygen through gills which are feathery brushes under flaps on the side of the fish's head. To take oxygen in, the fish gulps water through its mouth, swashes it over the gills and lets it out through the gill flaps.

Did You Know?

A rat can last longer without water than a camel.

a zero!"

That evening alarm bells rang in the house. Only one baby pigeon was in the pot!

"The crow must have EATEN the other one up!" sobbed Veena.

"I TOLD you to keep an EYE on the pot!" scolded her mother.

Arun bravely put a foot on the balcony. HSSSSSS! Something angrily charged at him!

"HELP!" screamed Arun, running back in fright.

"Why it's the other little pigee!" said Veena happily. "It must have fallen out of the pot!"

Just then, mama and papa bird came back with their babies' supper.

"What will they do?" wondered Veena.

Mama pigeon was NOT upset that her darling baby had fallen out of the pot. She sat in the pot and gave the other baby a little push. PLOP! The second baby pigeon joined the other one on the balcony floor. Now there were two little pigeons squealing and fluttering their wings angrily!

"I will NOT go out on the balcony!" declared Veena.

"Neither will I!" said Arun. "They will peck holes in my leg!"

But they did walk out on to the balcony. This happened once the baby pigeons learnt to FLY! First they flew onto the flowerpot. Then their mama coaxed them on to the balustrade of the

Did You Know?

Scorpions can withstand 200 times more nuclear radiation than humans can.

Did You Know?

Bookkeeper is the only word in the English language with three consecutive double letters.

balcony. Papa and mama pigeon waited patiently. Then suddenly the baby pigeons ventured out into the sky!

"GOOD BYE!" shouted Veena.

"TA TA!" yelled Arun.

"Yippee!" sighed mother happily.

Some days later mama and papa pigeon flew back onto the balcony.

"They have come back to say THANK YOU!" said Veena hopefully.

"They want THAT pot again!" said mother angrily. "SHOOOOO! GO AWAY!"

The pigeons flew away. They felt very bad. They had lost their rent free house. It came with a sweeper and a vigilant security guard who did NOT ask for a salary!

Next day papa pigeon flew back to Arun's house once again.

"MEOWWWWRRR!" snarled a big, black tabby angrily.

Arun and Veena now have a furry pet!

Papa pigeon flew off hurriedly.

"NOW we will NEVER have to keep an EYE on THAT flower pot!" said Veena and Arun happily!

●

Did You Know?

Theodore Roosevelt, one time president of America, had poor eye-sight from birth. In spite of this, he became a very good hunter and a voracious reader. Even when he lost the power of hearing in one ear, he could recognize the chirps of a variety of birds. Even when his nerves were giving him terrible pain, he never gave up writing. At last when doctors confined him to a chair, he said, "If that is so, then I shall try to live in this state."

RASHTRA DEEPIKA

CHILDREN'S DIGEST

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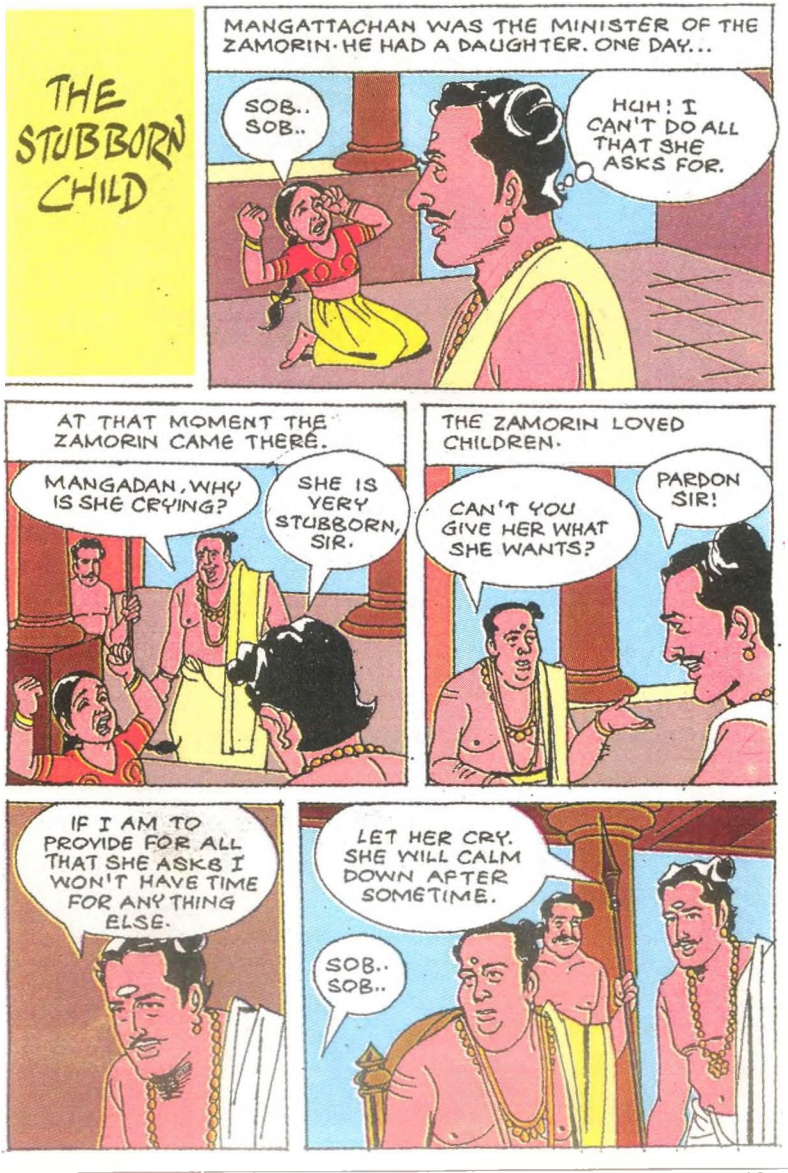
THE STUBBORN CHILD


MANGATTACHAN WAS THE MINISTER OF THE ZAMORIN. HE HAD A DAUGHTER. ONE DAY...
SOB.. SOB..
HUH! I CAN'T DO ALL THAT SHE ASKS FOR.
AT THAT MOMENT THE ZAMORIN CAME THERE.
MANGADAN, WHY IS SHE CRYING?
SHE IS VERY STUBBORN, SIR.
THE ZAMORIN LOVED CHILDREN.
CAN'T YOU GIVE HER WHAT SHE WANTS?
PARDON SIR!
IF I AM TO PROVIDE FOR ALL THAT SHE ASKS I WON'T HAVE TIME FOR ANY THING ELSE.
LET HER CRY. SHE WILL CALM DOWN AFTER SOMETIME.
SOB.. SOB..

DON'T SAY LIKE THAT. FULFIL THE WISHES OF CHILDREN.
CHILDREN ARE GODS. THEIR HEARTS ARE PURE.
I AGREE.
BUT EVEN YOU CAN BE DEFEATED IN FRONT OF A CHILD.
DON'T TALK NONSENSE.
LET ME SPEAK TO HER.
SOB.. SOB..
PON'T CRY CHILD. WHAT DO YOU WANT?
SOB.. SOB..
TELL ME!
I WANT A MATCH BOX.

HA.. HA.. IS THAT ALL?
GET A MATCH BOX!
THE ATTENDANT GAVE A MATCH BOX TO THE GIRL. STILL..
SOB.. SOB..
WHY ARE YOU CRYING AGAIN?
NOW WHAT DO YOU WANT?
I WANT AN ELEPHANT.
WHY NOT? I CAN GIVE YOU NINE ELEPHANTS.
BRING ME AN ELEPHANT.
THE ATTENDANT BROUGHT AN ELEPHANT.
NOW AREN'T YOU HAPPY?

BUT..
SOB.. SOB..
STILL YOU ARE CRYING? WHY?
WHAT ELSE DO YOU WANT?
SOB.. SOB..
TELL ME DON'T BE AFRAID.
I WILL DO WHATEVER YOU WANT.
SOB.. SOB..
I WANT YOU TO PUT THE ELEPHANT INTO THIS MATCH BOX.
?!!

Jason and the Golden Fleece - 8

That night, there was a terrible storm at sea. As the Argonauts had anchored at Ares, no harm befell them. The waves washed up a log by their camp. Clinging to the log were four castaways – Cytisorus, Argeus, Phrontis and Melanion, the sons of Phrixus and grandsons of Aeetes, king of Colchis and the owner of the Golden Fleece! They were related to Jason, too, for, Phrixus was Jason's cousin (Phrixus's mother Nephele and Jason's father Aeson being siblings). Jason welcomed them warmly. They told him that they had been shipwrecked during a voyage to Greece. When Jason informed them of his mission to recover the golden fleece, the foursome were torn between loyalty to their father (after all, it was to placate the spirit of Phrixus that the venture was being undertaken) and fear of their powerful grandfather. In the end, however, they decided to make common cause with their relations who had saved their lives.

The *Argo* then resumed its journey with the four additions on board. Soon the Argonauts could see the

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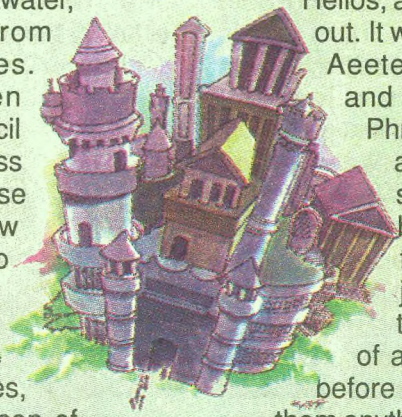
Caucasus, the highest of all mountains, towering over them. For three days they rowed steadily eastward, while the Caucasus rose higher hour by hour, until they reached the mouth of river Phasis that fed Colchis, and realised that they had finally reached their destination.

The *Argo* was docked in a sheltered backwater, concealed from prying eyes. Jason then called a council of war to discuss their next course of action. How were they to obtain the Golden Fleece from the powerful Aeetes, who was the son of no less a personality than Helios, the sun-god himself?



After some discussion, Jason suggested, "Accompanied by Phrixus's sons, I shall go to Aea (the capital of Colchis), meet King Aeetes, tell him all that has transpired, and request him to give me the fleece. Let's see how he reacts to the request. Only if he refuses need we think of resorting to guile or force."

This plan won the approval of all. Before long, Jason and the four sons of Phrixus were on their way to Aea. As they approached the magnificent palace which had been built by Hephaestus, the god of Fire, for Aeetes's father Helios, a woman came out. It was Chalciope, Aeetes's daughter and the widow of Phrixus. She was astonished to see her sons back so soon from their journey, and in the company of a stranger. But before she could ask them anything, Cytisorus stepped forward.

"Mother, do you know who this is?" he asked. "He's Jason, son of Aeson of Iolcos and our father's cousin. We met him by chance – a most fortunate chance indeed, for, we were shipwrecked in the course of our journey and would have drowned if he had not been

there in his ship, the *Argo,* to rescue us!"

Chalciope was delighted to meet her late husband's cousin, and showered thanks on Jason for rescuing her sons. But just then, they were interrupted by the arrival of King Aetes. He cut a magnificent figure, for, he shone like his father the Sun; his robes were of rich gold tissue and the rays of his diadem flashed fire. In his hand, he bore a jewelled sceptre, which glittered like the stars. But the eyes that blazed at Jason from beneath the furrowed brows struck a chill in his heart, for, the fury he saw there was like nothing he had seen before. In a stern voice he demanded, "Who are you, and what do you want here that you dare set foot on my shore? Do you take no account of my rule, nor of my people the Colchians who serve me—who never tired yet in battle, and who know well how to face an invader?"

Before Jason could reply, Cytisorus's brother Argeus, who was Aeetes's favourite grandson, hastened to pour oil on the troubled waters. He introduced Jason to the king, explaining that he and his brothers owed their lives to him. But when he went on to say that Jason had come to fetch away the Golden Fleece in accordance with an oracle, Aeetes's face glowed with rage.

Jason now spoke up in a pleasant, non-confrontational voice. "We are neither pirates nor lawless men. We come not to plunder or carry away

slaves from your land; but my uncle, the son of Poseidon, Pelias the Minuan king, has sent me on a quest to bring home the Golden Fleece. My comrades are no nameless men, but blue-blooded heroes whose fame has spread far and wide, and some are the sons of immortals."

Just then, Aeetes's second daughter, the beautiful princess Medea, came out of the palace. As her eyes fell on the handsome stranger and she heard his speech, so gallant yet courteous, she instantly lost her heart to him.

Although she did not know it, this was no accident but an event cleverly engineered by Hera, queen of the gods, in collusion with Aphrodite, the goddess of love. For, Hera knew that only Medea, a sorceress and the witch-priestess of Hecate, could help Jason, with her magical powers, to win the Golden Fleece. Under her instruction, Aphrodite had bribed her little son, Eros (the messenger of love) with a golden plaything, to aim his arrow at Medea's heart and make her fall in love with Jason!

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The frown vanished from Aeetes's face. For an instant, he was lost in reflection; then he seemed to have reached a decision. With a smile that held a challenge, he told Jason:

"Very well, you may have the fleece. But as it is not meet for a hero and a warrior to take something in charity, there are some heroic labours you must perform in exchange!"

"Very well," said Jason confidently. But Medea gasped, for, she knew what those labours were, and also that they were well-nigh impossible for any mortal to undertake.

(To continue)

English words of Latin origin

Here are some more words of Latin origin.

We often come across expressions like India vs South Africa on the sports page of newspapers. **vs** is the abbreviated form of **versus** which means **against**.

Important meetings usually have an **agenda**. Agenda means **things to be discussed** at the meeting.

The expansion of "i.e" that we often use is **id est** meaning **that is**.

We express the time of the day as "a.m" or "p.m", like in "I get up at 5 a.m. every day" or "My father returns from office by 8 p.m." The expansion of a.m. is **ante meridiem** which means **"before noon"**, and of p.m. is **post meridiem**, meaning **"after noon"**.

Persons who became words

Edmund Clerihew Bentley

Edmund Clerihew Bentley (1875-1956) was a popular English novelist and humorist of the early 20th century. He is remembered mainly for his classic detective story, *Trent's Last Case,* and for the verse form that was named after him - the clerihew. A clerihew is a humorous, rhyming poem in four lines of uneven length. Born in London in 1875, Bentley began writing clerihews while at school. One of his early clerihews goes as follows:

Sir Humphrey Davy
Abominated gravy.
He lived in the odium
Of having discovered sodium.

Bentley's first collection of verse in this vein was published in 1905 as *Biography For Beginners.* (More collections followed in 1929 and in 1939). It was soon after publication of the first volume that the name Clerihew came to be applied to this particular form of light verse, after its inventor.

Answers

QUIZ OF THE MONTH

1. Anna Karenina by Leo Tolstoy
2. Frederic Dannay and Manfred B. Lee.
3. One ARE
4. 'With a key'
5. The Rolling Stones
6. Pinocchio
7. Cesar Pelli
8. Table Tennis
9. Silicon
10. Oetzi or Otzi
11. Queen Isabella
12. Las Vegas, Nevada
13. "The Creation of Adam" by Michelangelo in the Sistine Chapel, Vatican.

CROSSWORD

Across:

1. Root 3. Zero 7. Miniature 8. Indonesia 10. Butterfly 13. Xmas 14. Grin

Down:

1. Ram 2. Owned 4. Emu 5. Opera 6. Fainted 8. Inbox 9. Safer 11. Tea 12. Yen

TRUE OR FALSE

1) False. Wolves hunt in groups called packs. 2) False. 3) True. 4) False. 5) False. The leader of the pack is the first to eat.

SLYLOCK FOX

Solution: Mosquitoes reproduce by laying eggs in water. Since the desert is very dry, it is unlikely there were mosquitoes bothering Reeky. The rat wasn't retrieving repellent; he was stealing money.

TRY IT...

Page 67

Numbers 2 and 6.

Page 80

Mailbox, flower, stamp, tie, tooth and letter.

Did You Know?

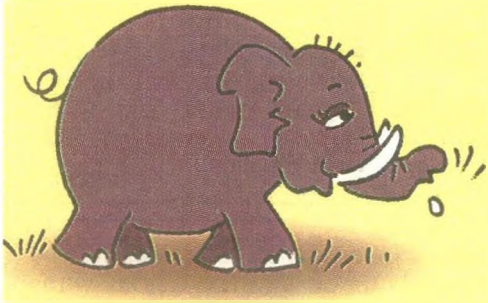
The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) was created in April 1963. Originally, the organization was known as Special Police Establishment created and functioning under the Delhi Special Police Establishment Act, 1946. Today, the CBI is the principal investigating agency of the Central Government. Big cases of fraud, cheating and embezzlement and other cases when committed by organized gangs of professional criminals having interstate or international ramifications are investigated by the CBI.

Proverbs

- If you want happiness for an hour – take a nap.
If you want happiness for a day – go fishing.
If you want happiness for a month – get married.
If you want happiness for a year – inherit a fortune.
If you want happiness for a lifetime – help someone else.

- Dogs do not actually prefer bones to meat; it's just that no one ever gives them meat.
- If you have never done anything evil, you should not be worrying about devils to knock at your door.

- Poor men seek meat for their stomach, rich men stomach for their meat.



- The elephant never gets tired of carrying its tusks.
- You won't help shoots grow by pulling them up higher.

- One father is more than a hundred schoolmasters.
- Giving your son a skill is better than giving him one thousand pieces of gold.

Bees - The Amazing Animals

There are many reasons why bees are important to us. Without bees, there will be no flowers or crops. Although birds, other insects and the wind also pollinate plants, bees do most of it.

Bees do not have ears, but they have an excellent sense of smell with chemoreceptors in their antennae. Bees see colours differently than we do. They are insensitive to red but detect ultraviolet light which is invisible to us. A worker bee communicates her floral findings by performing a dance on the honeycomb. The orientation of her movements and the frequency of her vibrations indicate the direction and distance of the flowers.

Between 20,000 and 60,000 bees live in a single hive. The queen bee lays 1,500 eggs a day and lives for up to two years. The drone, whose only job it is to mate with the queen bee, has a life-span of around 24 days. Worker bees - all sterile females - usually work themselves to death within 40 days in summer, collecting pollen and nectar. They also defend the hive.

Pollen is the main supply of protein and vitamins for bees, with the 10 amino acids they require. Nectar is up to 80% sugar but less than 0.2% in protein, so nectar is the carbohydrate supply for the hive. Bees place the nectar in honeycomb cells and then evaporate the water from the nectar by rapid wing movement. When the amount of water is less than 18%, the mixture is called honey and the bees cap off the cells. Thus honey is 80% sugars and 20% water. A mixture of honey and pollen is called "bee bread" and is the food for larvae and bees.

Jacopo Tintoretto's *St George and the Dragon*

The story of St George and the Dragon enjoyed great popularity during the Renaissance, and was frequently represented in painting and sculpture. Fifteenth century artists usually emphasized the chivalric aspect of the legend, depicting St George as the ideal courtly knight, fearlessly saving the elegant princess.